

NEBRASKA HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY
RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY FINAL REPORT
OF

BOX BUTTE COUNTY, NEBRASKA

PREPARED FOR
NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

SUBMITTED BY
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGY CENTER
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Finally, we extend our gratitude to the citizens of Box Butte County for accommodating us while we were completing our field work. We are very appreciative to everyone who attended the public meetings and provided information regarding the history of the county. We also greatly appreciate all of the county residents who inquired about our welfare while we were traveling the rural roads.

STATE AND FEDERAL APPRECIATION

The Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) projects are administered by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO) with the cooperation of the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS). The NeHBS is funded in part with the assistance of a federal grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

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I INTRODUCTION

Throughout most of Nebraska's history, historic preservation was the province of dedicated individuals and organizations working along with their local communities. Since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, however, the Governor of each state has been required to appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to oversee preservation efforts managed by the 1966 Act. In Nebraska, the Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) serves as SHPO. The staff of the NSHS' Historic Preservation Division forms the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO).

The NeSHPO administers a wide range of preservation programs. The duties of the NeSHPO relating to programs called for by the National Historic Preservation Act include:

- Conducting and maintaining a statewide historic buildings survey;
- Administering the National Register of Historic Places program;
- Assisting local governments in the development of local historic preservation programs and certification of qualifying governments;
- Administering a federal tax incentives program for the preservation of historic buildings;
- Assisting Federal agencies in their responsibility to identify and protect historic properties that may be affected by their projects and;
- Providing preservation education, training, and technical assistance to individuals and groups as well as local, state, and federal government agencies.

What follows is a brief description of NeSHPO programs. Though described separately, it is important to remember that the programs often act in concert and should be considered elements of the NeSHPO mission, as well as a part of the mission of the NSHS.

NEBRASKA HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY (NEHBS)

The Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) began in 1974. The survey is conducted on a county-by-county basis, and currently includes over 60,000 properties that reflect the rich architectural and historic heritage of Nebraska. The survey is conducted by researchers who drive every rural and urban public road in a county and record each property that meets certain historic and architectural requirements. Surveyors never enter private property without permission. In addition to this fieldwork, surveyors research the history of the area in order to better understand their subject. The NeHBS often includes thematic subjects that may be unique to a certain county, such as an historic highway or type of industry.

The purpose of the NeHBS is to help local preservation advocates, land-use planners, economic development coordinators, and tourism promoters understand the wealth of historic properties in their community. Properties included in the survey have no use-restrictions placed on them, nor does the survey require any level of maintenance or accessibility by property owners. Rather, the survey provides a foundation for identifying properties that may be worthy of preservation, promotion, recognition, and protection within a community.

This publication is the final report for the NeHBS investigation of Box Butte County. It provides a basis for preservation and planning in Box Butte County at all levels of government and for individual groups or citizens. Generally, this report includes properties that convey a sense of **architectural** significance. When possible and known, the report also describes properties that have **historical** significance. Although every effort has been made to be accurate, mistakes and omissions may occasionally occur. Additionally, as this project is in part federally funded, the NeSHPO must use federal guidelines when identifying and evaluating historic properties. In short, this publication is not an end in itself, but a beginning for public planners and individuals who value their community's history.

For more information call the NeHBS Program Associate at 402/471-4788 or the NeHBS Coordinator at 402/471-4773.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

One of the tasks of the NeHBS is to help identify properties that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is our nation's official list of significant historic properties. Created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register includes buildings, structures, districts, objects, and sites that are significant to our history or prehistory. These properties may reflect a historically significant pattern, event, person, architectural style, or archaeological site. National Register sites may be significant at the local, state, or national level.

Properties need not be as "historic" as Mt. Vernon or architecturally spectacular as the Nebraska State Capitol to be listed on the National Register. Historic properties that retain their physical integrity and convey important local significance may also be listed.

It is important to note what listing a property on the National Register means or, perhaps more importantly, what it does not mean. The National Register DOES NOT:

- Restrict a private property owner's ability to alter, manage, or dispose of a property;
- Require that properties be maintained, repaired, or restored;
- Invoke special zoning or local landmark designation;
- Allow the listing of individual private property over an owner's objection; or historic district designation over a majority of property owners' objections;
- Require public access to private property.

Listing a property on the National Register DOES:

- Provide prestigious recognition to significant properties;
- Encourage the preservation of historic properties;
- Provide information about historic properties for local and statewide planning purposes;
- Help promote community development, tourism, and economic development;
- Require owner consent to list a private property;
- Provide basic eligibility for financial incentives, if available.

For more information call the National Register coordinator at 402/471-4788

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (CLG)

The primary goal of the NeSHPO is to translate the federal preservation program, as embodied by the National Historic Preservation Act, to the local level. One of the most effective and important tools for this purpose is the Certified Local Government, or CLG, program. A CLG is a local government, either a county or municipality, that has adopted preservation as a priority. To become a CLG, a local government must:

- Establish a preservation ordinance that includes protection for historic properties at a level the community decides is appropriate;
- Create a commission to oversee the preservation ordinance and the CLG program;
- Promote preservation education and outreach;
- Conduct and maintain some level of historic building surveys;
- Establish a mechanism to locally landmark properties.

There are a number of advantages to achieving CLG status:

- A CLG is eligible to receive matching funds from the NeSHPO that are unavailable to non-CLGs;
- Contributing buildings within locally landmarked historic districts may be eligible for preservation tax incentives (see below) without being listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- CLGs have an additional tool when considering planning, zoning, and land use issues through their landmarking and survey programs;
- CLGs have the ability to monitor and preserve structures that reflect the community's heritage;
- Finally, a CLG, through its ordinance and commission, has a built-in mechanism to promote pride in an understanding of a community's history.

Designation of a local government for CLG status comes from the NeSHPO and the National Park Service. A community considering CLG status, however, has broad flexibility within the parameters discussed above. The emphasis of the CLG program is **local** management of historic properties with technical and economic assistance from the NeSHPO.

For more information call the CLG coordinator at 402/471-4767.

PRESERVATION TAX CREDITS

Since 1976, the Internal Revenue Code has contained provisions offering tax credits for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties. Historic properties are defined as those listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or as properties that contribute to the significance of a National Register or locally landmarked (by a CLG, see above) historic district. An income producing property may be a rental residential, office, commercial, or industrial property.

A certified rehabilitation is, generally, one that conforms to the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitation Historic Buildings". The Standards are a common sense approach to the adaptive re-use of historic buildings. It is important to remember that this program promotes the **rehabilitation** of historic properties so that they may be used to the benefit and enjoyment of a community into the twenty-first century. The program is not necessarily intended to **reconstruct** or **restore** historic buildings to exact, as-built specifications.

The tax incentive program in Nebraska has been responsible for:

- The re-investment of millions of dollars towards the preservation of historic buildings;
- The establishment of thousands of low and moderate income housing units as well as upper-end units;
- The adaptive re-use of previously under-utilized or un-utilized historic properties in older downtown commercial areas;
- Helping broaden the tax base;
- Giving real estate developers and city planners a tool to consider projects in older, historic neighborhoods.

Certification of the historic nature of the income-producing property (usually listing the property on the National Register) and certification of the historic rehabilitation are made by both the NeSHPO and the National Park Service. We strongly urge contacting the NeSHPO and a professional tax advisor, legal counsel, or appropriate local IRS office before initiating any activity for a project that anticipates the use of preservation tax incentives.

For more information call the Review and Preservation Services Program Associate at 402/471-4740.

FEDERAL PROJECT REVIEW (SECTION 106 REVIEW)

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that federal agencies take into account the effect of their undertakings on historic properties; seek ways to avoid or reduce adverse effects their projects may have on historic properties; and afford the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on historic properties. The regulations that govern the "Section 106" process also require that the federal agency consult with the NeSHPO to: identify historic properties in the project area; assess the effects a project may have; and seek ways to avoid or reduce adverse effects to historic properties.

For example, if the Federal Highway Administration, through the Nebraska Department of Roads, contemplates construction of a new highway, they must contact the NeSHPO for assistance in determining whether any sites or structures listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register exist in the project area. Notice that a property need not actually be listed on the register, only appear eligible. This process is to take place early enough in the planning process to allow for alternatives should historic properties be located in the project area: i.e. in the example above, the modification of a new highway's right-of-way could avoid an archaeological site or historic barn.

It is important to note that public participation in this process is vital. The Section 106 process requires the federal agency to seek the views of the public and interested parties if adverse effects to historic properties are discovered through consultation with the NeSHPO. The NeSHPO examines information provided by the federal agency, the NeHBS, and the National Register, but often the most valuable information comes from comments provided by the public. Section 106 was included in the National Historic Preservation Act to protect locally significant historic properties from unwitting federal action. It is truly a law that gives the public a voice in an often unsympathetic bureaucratic system.

For more information about Section 106 review, call the NeSHPO at 402/471-4787.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The primary function of the NeSHPO is to assist communities in preserving significant buildings, sites, objects, and structures that convey a sense of community history. The most powerful tool available to the NeSHPO in this regard is public education. For this reason, NeSHPO staff spends considerable time conducting public meetings and workshops and disseminating information to the public. The NeSHPO also works with teachers to help design and implement classroom strategies that teach students the value of their local history and heritage.

Our goal is to assist local individuals, groups, and governments to understand, promote, and preserve historic properties. The NeSHPO advocates not only the self-evident aesthetic advantages of historic preservation, but also the potential for preservation to help promote economic development, community planning, tourism, environmental sensitivity, and land-use planning.

The short descriptions included in this introduction to the Box Butte County Final Report are meant to orient the reader to the NeHBS program within the larger mission of the NeSHPO. As all NeSHPO programs spring from a common source, the National Historic Preservation Act, they work best when they function together, either in whole or in part. For the programs to work at all, they require the interest and participation of the people they are meant to serve.

For more information about the NeSHPO or the programs described above, please call 402/471-4787.

METHODOLOGY AND HISTORIC INTEGRITY

In September 1995, Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center (MVAC) contracted with the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO) to conduct the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) of Box Butte County. MVAC initiated the *Reconnaissance Survey and Thematic Survey of Box Butte County, Nebraska* by attending a preliminary meeting with the NeSHPO staff. At such time, both parties clarified the scope of work to be performed. MVAC staff also performed the prefield research by reviewing, gathering, and/or copying all necessary maps, previous survey forms, and photographic cards, as well as

collecting site specific and general background information on Box Butte County. Other repositories visited during this phase included the Nebraska State Historical Society Archives, Lincoln Public Library, and C.Y. Thompson and Love libraries at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

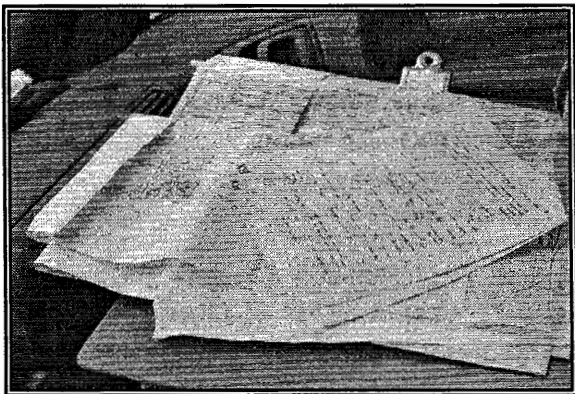


FIGURE 1 - FIELD MAPS, 1995, NSHS

The field inventory served as the next phase of the project. Prior to initiating the inventory, Barbara Kooiman, Principal Investigator and Elizabeth Butterfield, architectural historian/historian, updated reconnaissance survey forms utilized in the 1994-1995 survey project and gathered new urban maps with the assistance of the NeSHPO staff. A preliminary review of the project area by the MVAC field crew (Kooiman and Butterfield) and NeSHPO (Bill Callahan and Carol Ahlgren)

established the existence of any rare or unusual property types in Box Butte County. The field inventory criteria utilized by the survey crew was designed by the NeSHPO based on an understanding of relative integrity in the county. Utilizing the criteria, MVAC surveyed all properties appearing to be at least fifty years old (pre-1946) and displaying high integrity of materials, design, location, setting, workpersonship, association, and feeling. Alterations on buildings, such as windows, modern siding material (i.e., vinyl, metal, permastone, asbestos), and/or added porches or rear additions, did not meet the criteria for survey. [Barb's sentences?] In regards to abandoned buildings, MVAC only surveyed properties constructed in the nineteenth century.

In October 1995, the MVAC field crew, consisting of Kooiman and Butterfield, conducted a visual inventory of all properties discernible from the right-of-way. Distant properties were evaluated using binoculars and a telephoto camera lens where necessary. In instances where a property was located a great distance from the road or hidden by trees, surveyors did not inventory the site due to the NeSHPO policy of no trespassing on private property. Every public road was traversed in the county, with the exception of some roads designated as "primitive" on the county highway map. In a situation where a primitive road was overgrown with weeds, the survey crew did not drive the route. Every section mile of road not driven was marked on the field map.

Field inventory included the recordation of each inventoried property on a field map appropriate to its location (i.e. rural, village, and U.S.G.S), photographic documentation of

each property in black and white film (35mm film, two 45 degree angle shoots), and notation of pertinent facts (i.e., shape, size, height, roof type) on a pre-approved field inventory form. The completion of the field form included utilizing historic context and property type codes, designated by the NeSHPO, to categorize each property. Once the field survey was completed, the film was processed and corresponding roll and frame numbers were entered onto the field forms. Furthermore, the survey numbers were copied from the field maps onto final maps in pencil and then highlighted with a yellow pencil. Eventually, all of this fieldwork information was compiled on one form and entered into the appropriate NeHBS database field.

In October of 1995, during the field inventory, Kooiman and Butterfield attended a public meeting at the Alliance Municipal Building hosted by Pamela Anderson, Alliance Mainstreet Manager, and Bill Callahan and Carol Ahlgren of the NeSHPO. Both the contractors and NeSHPO staff explained to the public the purpose of the survey and its related studies, fielded questions from local citizens regarding the purpose of the survey, and collected information from residents regarding general history associated with the county and site specific information. While in Box Butte County, Kooiman and Butterfield also conducted research at local repositories such as the Knight Museum and the Slagle Memorial Library.

As part of a special thematic study for the project, MVAC also intensively surveyed properties associated with Alliance's downtown. This process included all of the above-referenced activities associated with the reconnaissance survey, as well as drawing site plans of each property and photographing them with color slide film. MVAC also prepared a commercial area map and a comprehensive property list, as well as wrote a chapter in the final report regarding the historical and architectural development of Alliance's downtown.



For the intensive survey of Alliance's commercial area, MVAC also systematically researched the *Alliance*

FIGURE 2 - NESHPO STAFF AT PUBLIC MEETING

Times, *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times*, and *Alliance Times & Herald*, spanning years from 1891 to 1945. The newspapers were loaned to MVAC on microfilm by the NSHS archives. Collected historic information includes construction dates, public improvements, county history, and community histories. This information was then organized into thematic files.

Site specific information was labeled with a survey number associated with the NeSHPO system. All of the data gathered from the newspapers was incorporated into the county files submitted to the NeSHPO.

The final deliverables for this project, submitted to the NeSHPO in July 1996, included maps, site plans, source files, field survey forms, color slides, photographic negative and contact sheets, and one-hundred copies of the final report.

SURVEY RESULTS

Final results of the NeHBS of Box Butte County consisted of a total of 367 surveyed properties. MVAC identified twenty-three individual properties as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Currently, Box Butte County boasts three individual properties listed on the National Register. In satisfaction of the thematic portion of the contract, thirty-one properties associated with Alliance's downtown were identified and intensively surveyed.

The tables below tabulate the inventory which was made in 1995-1996 of historic properties in Box Butte County:

NUMERICAL SUMMARIES OF BOX BUTTE COUNTY RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY¹

CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY EVALUATION CHART

Site#/Name Community	Contributing Buildings	Contributing Sites	Contributing Structures	Contributing Objects
BX00- Rural	189	15	26	0
BX01- Alliance	275	0	0	1

¹ Please see the Appendix for definitions regarding the words: property; building; site; structure; object; and contributing (NeHBS).

Site#/Name Community	Contributing Buildings	Contributing Sites	Contributing Structures	Contributing Objects
BX02- Berea	5	0	0	0
BX03- Hemingford	65	0	1	0
Total Surveyed	534	15	17	1

PROPERTY SUMMARY TABLE

Site#/Name Community	Total Properties Surveyed Prior to 1995	Properties Added in 1995/1996 Survey	Total Properties Evaluated in 1995/1996
BX00- Rural	18	61	79
BX01- Alliance	68	163	231
B02- Berea	2	2	4
BX03- Hemingford	15	38	53
Total ² Surveyed	103	260	367

² Total surveyed differs from "properties" surveyed because properties may be made up of several buildings, sites, structures, or objects, such as a farmstead (counted as one property) with numerous outbuildings.

II

HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF BOX BUTTE COUNTY

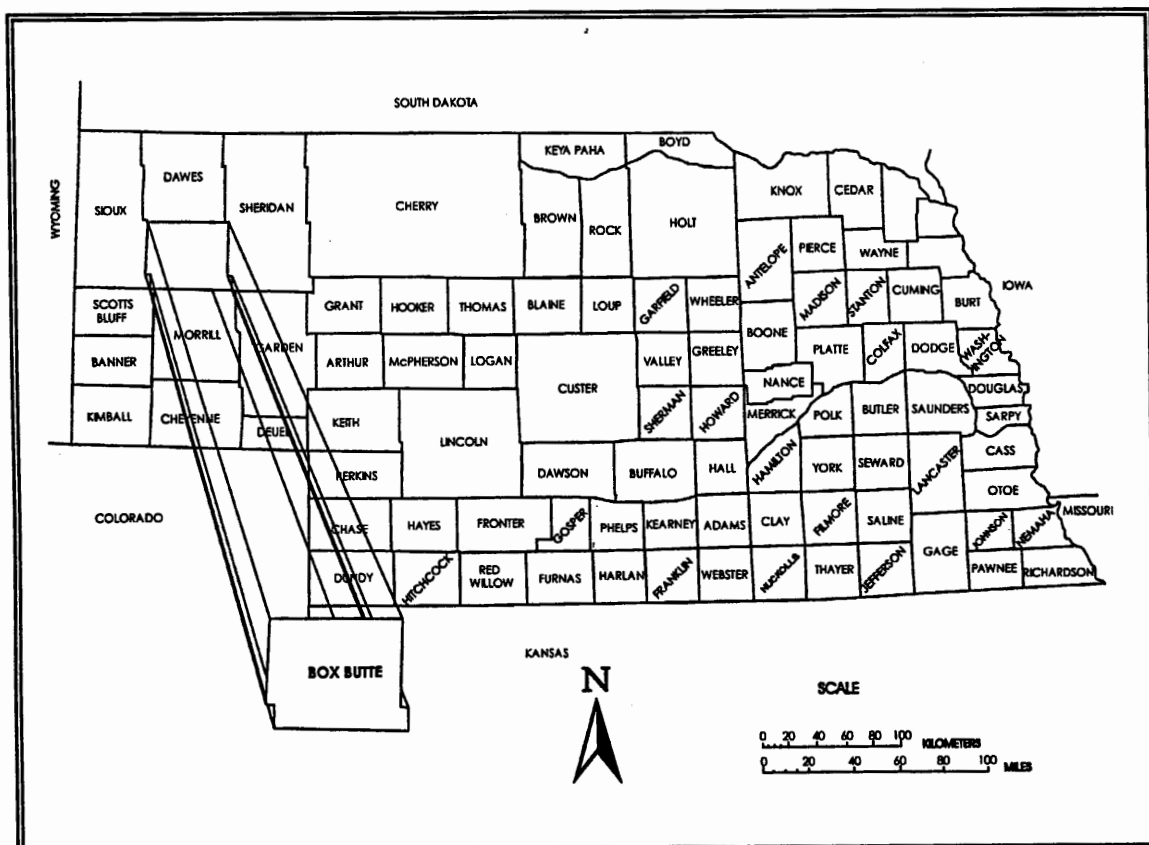


FIGURE 3 - MAP OF NEBRASKA WITH BOX BUTTE COUNTY HIGHLIGHTED

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Box Butte County is located in the panhandle of Nebraska, four hundred miles northwest of Lincoln, the state capital, and 257 miles east of Denver, Colorado. The present-day Box Butte County communities of Alliance, Berea, and Hemingford, are located along the Burlington Northern railroad tracks, which run from southeast to northwest through the county. Box Butte County, which is almost square in

shape and measures 1,077 square miles, is surrounded by Dawes County, Nebraska to the north, Sheridan County, Nebraska to the east, Morrill and Scotts Bluff counties, Nebraska to the south, and Sioux County, Nebraska to the west.

The varied landscape in Box Butte County ranges from flat to rugged terrain, and descends in elevation to the southeast. The majority of the county is located within the Box Butte Plain Region. A sliver of the northwest corner is within the Pine Ridge Region, and a small portion of the north central part of the county and the southeastern corner of the county is located in the Sand Hills Region. The area also features an assortment of soils, including Rosebud-Bridgeport and Valentine-Nueces-Dune Sand. Agricultural products produced on the Rosebud-Bridgeport soil include wheat, corn, oats, rye, barley, and potatoes. Valentine-Nueces-Dune soil, which supports a rich grassy blanket, is well suited for grazing animals. Based upon the soil types and climate, Box Butte County is suitable for yielding a variety of cultivated crops and raising livestock.³

The weather conditions in Box Butte County and the surrounding region consist of a wide range of temperatures and small amounts of precipitation. The coolest month of the year is January, which is reported with a normal daily high temperature of 37.2 degrees Fahrenheit and low temperature of 11.2 degrees Fahrenheit. The warmest month of the year, July, offers a normal daily maximum temperature of 89.2 degrees Fahrenheit and a minimum of 59.2 degrees Fahrenheit. The majority of precipitation in the county falls between the months of May and June, 2.6 and 2.9 inches respectively, with the year's total at 14.5 inches. June, July, August, September, and October provide the most clear days of the year, with each reflecting double digit figures. The most clear of these months is September with 14.5 days of cloudless skies from sunrise to sunset.⁴

NATIVE AMERICAN INHABITANTS

At the eve of Euro-American exploration and eventual settlement of present-day Nebraska, the state was inhabited in three distinct regions by diverse Native American tribes. These tribes ranged from sedentary to hunting and gathering lifestyles. The Omaha, Otoe (Oto),

³ Alliance, Hemingford, Marsland, Crawford and Whitney (NE) Chambers of Commerce, *Northwestern Nebraska* (Chicago, IL: Poole Bros, u.d.), 11; James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 8-11.

⁴ The weather information is based upon figures reported for a community (Scotts Bluff) located within a forty-five mile radius from Alliance. McKinley Conway and Linda L. Luston, ed., *The Weather Handbook* (Norcross, GA: Conway Data, Inc., 1990), 196.

Missouri, Iowa, and Ponca Indians inhabited eastern Nebraska; the Pawnee populated central Nebraska; and the Dakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho roamed western Nebraska.⁵

Current-day Box Butte County was inhabited by the Dakota Indians, consisting mostly of Teton Sioux bands such as the Brule and Oglala. The Dakota, considered a nomadic group, practiced a hunting and gathering lifestyle throughout the northwestern part of the state. The parameters of their territory in Nebraska included land in the panhandle north of the North Platte River extending approximately one hundred miles through the interior of the state. In 1868, the Dakota entered into a treaty with the government which confined them to a reservation in South Dakota. However, this treaty offered them hunting rights into the northern tier of Nebraska. By 1876, most likely as a result of grievances voiced by Nebraska homesteaders, the government entered into another treaty with the Dakota which ended the tribe's liberty to enter Nebraska. This activity preceded the Nebraska State Legislature's designation of Box Butte County by only a decade.⁶

BRIEF HISTORY OF NEBRASKA

The Great Plains state of Nebraska holds an important role in the history of the United States. Though today it is thought of primarily as a producer of agricultural products such as grain and livestock, its earlier history is closely linked to its importance as a transportation corridor. After initial exploration of the Great Plains, early travelers used the Platte River Valley as a transportation route, known as collectively as the "overland trail," as well as the Mormon, California and Oregon trails. As the region became more heavily settled, the overland trail was replaced by the first transcontinental railroad. The trains brought settlers, and as the populations grew, the necessity for improved roads rose. By the second decade of the twentieth century the Lincoln Highway traversed both the state and the country, becoming the first east-west transcontinental highway. During the first and second world wars, Nebraska's important transportation routes helped establish the state as the recipient of military bases, air fields, and munitions production plants. Today, in the last decade of the twentieth century, Nebraska boasts a strong and diversified economic base, which has been encouraged and enhanced by its role as a nationally important transportation center.

⁵ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977), 17-19; James A. Beattie, *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, NE: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 18-20.

⁶ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977), 18; James A. Beattie, *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, NE: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 18-20, 24.

The earliest contact by non-native people in the Great Plains was made in 1541 by a gold-seeking Spanish explorer named Francisco Vasquez Coronado. Though many historians believe that Coronado actually reached Nebraska, the location of his contact has never been confirmed. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Coronado did investigate the Great Plains, and finding the relatively flat, arid region to be devoid of gold, the Spanish turned their attention elsewhere. Almost two centuries passed before the region of Nebraska was entered by the Spanish in an organized fashion.⁷

The Spanish, who were well-established south of the Rio Grande River by the early 1700s, had heard that the Pawnee were trading with the French on the plains. In an attempt to hinder their French rivals, by 1720 the Spanish sent a small military party to the northern plains, where they crossed the Arkansas River and continued north to the South Platte River. After the party was attacked by the Pawnee, the few survivors returned to Santa Fe. Thereafter, the French were the primary non-native influence in the plains.⁸

The French first came to the area now known as Nebraska when Father Marquette and Louis Joliet, traveling westward, crossed the Missouri in 1673. By 1739 two explorers, Paul and Pierre Mallet, assuming the Missouri River led to Santa Fe, pursued the route they hoped would lead to trade with the Spanish in New Mexico. Their exploration took them to the Platte, Loup and Republican rivers in present-day Nebraska, and they eventually found their way to Santa Fe.⁹

Despite the French contact in the Great Plains, in 1763 the Treaty of Paris was signed and all of the land west of the Mississippi River became Spanish, while all land east of the Mississippi River went to the British. Though the Spanish made several attempts at trading with the plains Indians, they had limited success. By 1800, the Spanish agreed to turn Louisiana back to the French, which led to the Louisiana Purchase, when Napoleon sold land west of the Mississippi River to the United States in 1803.¹⁰

Almost immediately after the Louisiana Purchase was secured, President Thomas Jefferson sought an appropriation from Congress to send an exploration team to the Louisiana

⁷ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 30.

⁸ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 31.

⁹ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 34.

¹⁰ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 34-37.

Territory. In May of 1804, the Lewis and Clark expedition began at the confluence of the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers. Though the Lewis and Clark expedition did not extend far into present-day Nebraska, their observations and brief stay at Council Bluffs, in present-day Iowa, led to the establishment of military camps in that vicinity.¹¹

Between 1841 and 1866, an estimated three-hundred and fifty thousand settlers traversed the overland trail routes, seeking opportunities in the west. Initially, based on earlier reports of the beautiful land on the west side of the Rockies, the settlers were headed to Oregon. However, before long, the destinations also included Utah, which was of particular interest to the Mormons, and the 1848 discovery of gold in California led many to try their fortune there. For most travelers, the route began in Independence, Missouri, headed west into present-day Kansas, then followed the Little Blue River to the southwest corner of what is today Gage County, Nebraska, continued west to Adams County, and finally turned north to the Platte River. Travelers followed the Platte River along its flat and wide valley for the next 250 miles, taking the north fork of the waterway, past geographic features such as Courthouse Rock, Jail Rock, Chimney Rock and Scotts Bluff, all in the panhandle of present-day Nebraska. From there, the travelers took their wagon trains into present-day Wyoming, through South Pass in the Rockies, then finally toward their final destinations--Oregon, Utah or California.¹²

In 1854, concurrent with the great migration west, Nebraska became a territory. With this new status, settlement in the new territory increased. The Pre-Emption Act of 1841 allowed an individual to file a claim on 160 acres, live on it for a year, then purchase the title for \$1.25 per acre at a government sale. Veterans were allowed to acquire land through military bounty land warrants without necessarily living on the land. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Bill allowed settlers to move onto unsurveyed lands, an indication that settlers had occupied land more quickly than the surveyors could map it.¹³

In 1854, the first year lands were sold, 2,732 settlers were reported in the Nebraska Territory. Settlement of the territory occurred somewhat slowly until two important pieces of legislation in 1862 encouraged more homesteading. The Homestead Act and the Pacific Railroad Charter both had immediate and long-term impact on settlement in Nebraska. The

¹¹ James A. Beattie, ed. *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 33-36.

¹² Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1977), 33-37.

¹³ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1977), 55-56.

1869 census, counted 28,841 occupants in the Nebraska Territory, and more than three-fourths of those were American-born, mostly from the New England and the mid-Atlantic states.¹⁴

The Union Pacific Railroad began construction across Nebraska in 1865 immediately following the conclusion of the Civil War. The Pacific Charter allowed the railroad company grants of ten and later twenty alternate sections per mile of public domain land, as well as generous, per-mile cash incentives for rail construction. The purpose of these grants was to help alleviate the cost of land acquisition by the railroad companies, and encourage transcontinental railroad development. The Union Pacific rail was laid in stages, with survey crews preceding the grading crews, who were in front of the rail-laying crews. By October of 1866, rails were in place west of Cozad, Nebraska, and the project was one year ahead of schedule. By the time Nebraska achieved statehood on 1 March 1867, the railroad spanned the entire length of the state. By 1869, the Union Pacific rails united with those of the Central Pacific Railroad at Promontory, Utah and the transcontinental railroad was completed.¹⁵

Though other railroads came after the Union Pacific, none captured the great fanfare and attention. The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad began construction in 1869, and reached Denver within a few years. Though the Burlington did not receive the large cash grants given to the Union Pacific, it did secure land grants, which allowed both railroads to establish new communities along the tracks. The Burlington land speculators established planned, permanent communities approximately every ten miles along the tracks. These towns were platted by the railroad companies, with water wells and other services. The railroad companies then spent enormous amounts of money advertising and promoting the new towns largely toward foreign immigrants.¹⁶

The Homestead Act of 1862 allowed "any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of intention to become such...and who has never borne arms against the United States government or given aid and comfort to its enemies" to file a claim on no more than a quarter section of unappropriated public land. If they continued to live on the land for

¹⁴ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1977), 60; James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 94-95.

¹⁵ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1977), 62-67.

¹⁶ Dorothy Weyer Creigh, *Nebraska: a Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. 1977), 68-70.

five years, and were United States citizens, they could receive the final patent for the claim at the end of the fifth year. Though the intent of the Homestead Act was to encourage settlers to come to states and territories such as Nebraska, the act was much abused by land speculators. In reality, by 1900, only fifty-two percent of the land filed for claim by individuals was actually claimed and retained.¹⁷

Early plains settlers often built shelters out of sod, and usually built second-generation frame houses when they reached financial stability. Sod houses were built with blocks of soil and grass generally cut from the earth near the house location. These houses, unique to the Great Plains, served efficiently until the fledgling farmers could save enough money to buy lumber in town, shipped from the large lumber mills of Wisconsin and Minnesota. Settlers built their houses using the balloon frame method, which incorporated a "skeleton" of milled lumber boards and a "skin" of clapboard siding. These frame houses were simple to build and sturdy, serving their occupants for many decades.

Throughout the 1870s, due to the length of the growing season and amount of rainfall, the farmers of eastern Nebraska found that crops such as wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, potatoes, and hay grew best. In addition to traditional farming in the east, during the 1870s the cattle industry was established in the western part of Nebraska. The Western Trail, the route for driving longhorn cattle from Texas to shipping points north, traversed the southwestern part of Nebraska. Ogallala, in Keith County, served as an important Union Pacific way station at the north end of the trail. As the cattle drives ended in the 1880s due to new laws restricting the large drives, the beef industry thrived in the Nebraska's Panhandle. Here, good pasture area was available and the land had been settled in sufficiently low numbers to allow open range ranching. The cattle drives and later western Nebraska ranching were encouraged by rail transportation of livestock and the establishment of packing houses and stockyards in Omaha in the 1870s and 1880s.¹⁸

Agricultural development continued into the last decades of the nineteenth century. The railroads sold much of their government-acquired land to speculators, who in turn offered it at a higher price to the farmers. In 1880 there were 63,389 farms in Nebraska, and by 1890 this number had increased to 113,608. Though in 1880 land in agricultural use had not extended much past Grand Island, a decade later the economic force of agriculture had expanded across the entire state. Corn continued to be the strongest of the crops grown in the late nineteenth century, mostly because it was a high-yield crop, could be fed profitably

¹⁷ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 165-167,

¹⁸ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 184, 193-194, 209.

to livestock, and grew well in the Nebraska climate. Wheat varieties which thrived in the Nebraska climate were not readily available until the 1890s. Nonetheless, once introduced, wheat became an equally important crop.¹⁹

As noted by historian Frederick Jackson Turner in his well-known 1893 thesis entitled, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", the frontier period was coming to an end. Though there were areas of northwestern Nebraska which would not be settled until after the turn of the century, settlement in the state was essentially completed by the early 1890s. The number of farms in the state increased from 113,608 in 1890 to 121,525 in 1900, and 129,678 in 1910. Agricultural land prices increased over this period, and livestock and crop prices doubled and tripled in value. By the turn of the century new agricultural implements and the introduction of hearty varieties of crops, particularly winter wheat and alfalfa, aided the success of farming in Nebraska. To address the low rainfall in the state, by 1895 the state legislature had created the Board of Irrigation. As a result, by the turn of the century, more than one hundred and fifty thousand acres of land were irrigated.²⁰

New land settlement legislation in the early twentieth century continued to influence Nebraska's population. Although the Homestead Act of 1862 worked well in regions best suited for agricultural development, a quarter-section of land was insufficient to support farming in the arid country of northwestern Nebraska. Cattlemen required larger parcels for their ranging livestock. The 1904 Kinkaid Act provided homestead units of 640 acres (one section) in thirty-seven northwestern counties where nearly eight million acres of unclaimed government property still remained. Irrigable lands were excluded from Kinkaid claims. Though available statistics do not sufficiently differentiate between Homestead Act claims and Kinkaid Act claims in the northwest, it soon became apparent that even one section of land was insufficient for cattle grazing, which required fifteen to twenty acres per animal.²¹

As Nebraska's population grew in the early decades of the twentieth century, the need for better roads became apparent. In 1904, when the first automobile was sighted in Nebraska, the state reported over seventy-nine thousand miles as public roads. Only thirteen of those miles were improved with stone or clay. By 1910, as more automobiles were on the roads, improvements increased, although seventy-seven counties still reported no improved roads.

¹⁹ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 204-206.

²⁰ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 258-260.

²¹ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 268-269; James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, NE: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 252.

The Lincoln Highway Association, which formed in 1912 to promote the country's first transcontinental highway, encouraged "all-season" highway improvements along its proposed route. The Lincoln Highway crossed the state of Nebraska, entering at Omaha, and continuing west through Columbus, Grand Island, North Platte and Sidney. Adequate rural roads were finally being built in Nebraska.²²

As the rural population of Nebraska expanded, Nebraska farmers experimented with new crops. They planted sugar beets, potatoes and alfalfa in the Panhandle, and pursued hearty strains of wheat elsewhere in the state. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the need for food increased dramatically and agricultural prices soared. To take advantage of prices which nearly doubled, Nebraska farmers increased their wheat production, expanding cultivation into southwest counties previously used as pasture lands. When prices continued to rise after the war, Nebraska farmers bought more land, which led to an over-extension of credit in the state by the mid-1920s. By 1923, one-fourth of mortgaged farms failed and, as a result of unstable economic conditions, nearly six-hundred fifty banks closed in the state. By the time the stock market crashed in 1929, Nebraska farmers were already adjusting to hard times.²³

Though the lack of banks during the 1930s caused hardship for the people of Nebraska, the most devastating aspect of the Great Depression was the unusually harsh weather conditions. Nearly a decade of drought, heat, low rainfall and wind storms devastated Nebraska crops, which led to the necessity for enormous amounts of federal aid. Programs such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Public Works Administration (PWA), Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and other aid programs assisted destitute Nebraskans through the most challenging decade of the century. Despite the New Deal programs, hundreds of thousands of agricultural acres were abandoned and the state's population dropped by sixty-five thousand between 1930 and 1940.²⁴

Despite economic hard times during the Great Depression, the New Deal programs of the 1930s gave an important boost to the rural highways of Nebraska. By 1921 over five thousand miles of road in the state were selected as major highways, and by 1930 the Department of Roads and Irrigation took on the task of graveling and grading as many as

²² James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 288-290.

²³ Dorothy Weyer Creigh: *Nebraska, A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W North & Company, Inc., 1977), 183-185.

²⁴ Dorothy Weyer Creigh: *Nebraska, A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. North & Company, Inc., 1977), 185-187.

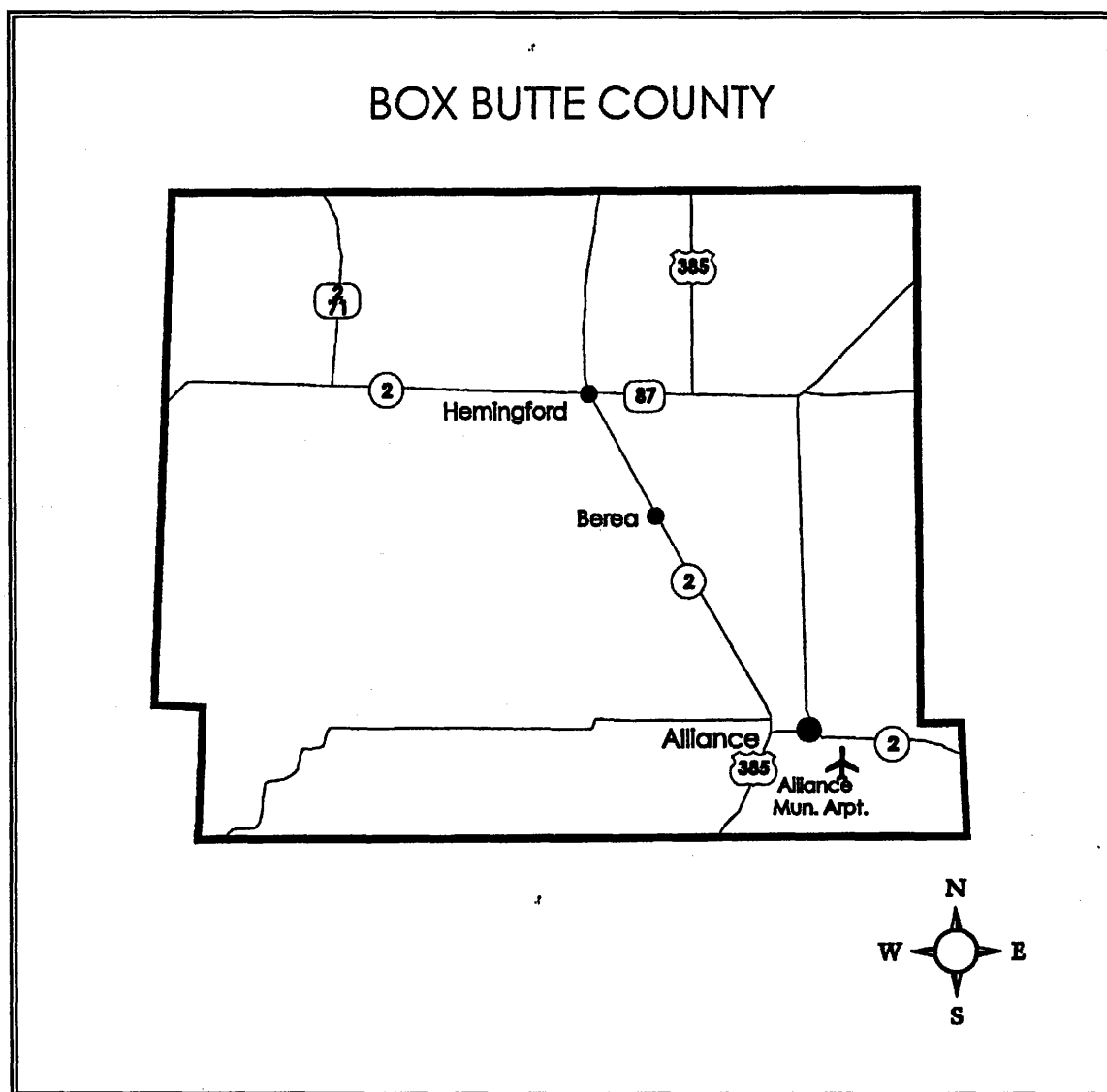
eight thousand miles of state roads. The greatest programs in road development in Nebraska took place when the federal relief programs of the New Deal era furthered state highway improvements with over eighty million dollars in funds, while another seventy-seven million dollars went to counties, townships, cities, and villages in the state.²⁵

Though the late 1930s proved to be more stable times for Nebraskans, the early 1940s brought World War II which had its home front impact in the state. Though many people left the state during the war to work in west coast war plants, a number of war-related industries were established in Nebraska. Ordnance plants and/or depots emerged in Grand Island, Hastings, Mead, and Sidney, and the Glen L. Martin Bomber Plant constructed military aircraft south of Omaha. The Army Air Forces established air bases at Alliance, Ainsworth, Bruning, Fairmont, Grand Island, Harvard, Kearney, Lincoln, McCook, Scottsbluff, and Scribner. After the war, Offutt Air Force Base, south of Omaha, was established as the headquarters for the Strategic Air Command during the Cold War era. All of these industries and air fields provided many jobs for both military personnel and civilians throughout the war and many continued well into the Cold War era, through the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.²⁶

Present-day Nebraska, which experienced early exploration by the Spanish and French, was acquired by the United States through the 1804 Louisiana Purchase. By the mid-1800s, this region experienced significant westward traffic due to its location along the overland trail. This western migration prompted the construction of railroads through the territory, which led to the platting of many of Nebraska's towns and cities. Twentieth century development of the state benefitted from improved transportation systems and agricultural techniques, as well as the establishment of military facilities. This ability to modernize allowed Nebraska to overcome economic recessions and support America's position in international affairs.

²⁵ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 288-290.

²⁶ James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 335.

BOX BUTTE COUNTY HISTORY**FIGURE 4 - MAP BOX BUTTE COUNTY**

Box Butte County obtained its name from a rectangular-shaped butte north of Alliance. As early as 1871, some of the first Euro-Americans to settle in the county were ranchers. By the mid-1870s, due to the gold rush in the Black Hills, a route known as the Sidney-

Deadwood Trail (BX00-006)²⁷ passed through present-day Box Butte County. This route, which was utilized by freighters and private wagons, provided increased exposure to the area.²⁸

The panhandle of Nebraska was apportioned several times before Box Butte County was formed. In 1883, the state legislature's designation of Sioux and Cheyenne counties split the panhandle. In 1885, as a result of the vastness of the region, Governor Dawes split Sioux County into Sioux, Dawes, and Sheridan counties. By the next year, because of the distance required to travel to the Dawes county seat of Chadron, people in the southern portion of the county petitioned that it be divided again. Between 1886-1887, Box Butte County was formed with approximately 1,080 square miles in its borders. Reasons for selecting the name Box Butte most likely related to the fact that railroad companies had been attracting settlers to the area with the phrase "come to the Box Butte Country for free homes." The first tax list of Box Butte County, gathered in 1887, reported a total of 1,146 taxpayers.²⁹

Similar to many neighboring counties, community location, development, and growth in Box Butte revolved around the railroad. As early as 1884, an engineer for the Burlington Railroad surveyed the county for a western line. Two of the earliest settled communities in the county, Box Butte City and Nonpareil, were bypassed and without the presence of the railroad, neither community survived. In 1887, the Lincoln Land Company, which was affiliated with the Burlington Railroad, purchased land in the county for the establishment of Alliance. The company also secured the assets of the Hemingford Town Company.³⁰

²⁷ NeHBS site numbers are identified like this throughout the text, indicating a contributing site as it is mentioned. Site numbers are based on the county code (BX for Box Butte), community code (i.e. 00 for rural, 01 for Alliance, 02 for Berea and 03 for Hemingford), and the sequence in that county and community in which it was inventoried.

²⁸ "Box Butte County," File: *Alliance and Surrounding Counties*, located at the Slagle Memorial Library, Alliance, NE; Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 5; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), Chronological Index.

²⁹ Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 6, 9; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 2-4; Elton A. Perkey, "Perkey's Names of Nebraska Locations," *Nebraska History* 58 (Fall 1978): 548; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), 31-32.

³⁰ The only existing communities in Box Butte County are located along the Burlington tracks. Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 2, 4; Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 7-9, 14.

Although railroad companies operated specifically to expand rail transportation, they also made money from the development of towns as trade centers along the tracks. In order to establish a thriving commercial hub, railroad companies solicited businesses to open in the fledgling communities. The land companies quickly realized that the best way to entice business people into the area was to provide a well-laid out plat. One of the first types of railroad town designs involved the business district abutting the tracks. A later plan, known as the T-town, consisted of the main street running perpendicular to the tracks. This was one of the most popular types of railroad town plats in the country. The plan often designated lots along the tracks specifically for railroad-related structures, such as grain elevators and depots. Many railroad town plats featured half blocks facing the main street which divided into twelve lots. Residential blocks were larger, containing a total of twelve lots, indicating the intended development of the two areas. While the T-shaped layout usually placed the depot as a terminus, perpendicular to the tracks, public institutions were generally located on the outskirts of the plat. This left the core of the plat open for commercial development.³¹

The evolution of the county seat demonstrates the influence of the Burlington Railroad in the county. Due to its central location, Nonpareil became the first county seat in 1887, one of three communities to bear the title. By the next year, the Burlington Railroad had entered the county and to the misfortune of Nonpareil, it was not on the route. By 1890, based upon an agreement with the Burlington, Hemingford was elected as the new county seat. Later, after Alliance was designated a division point for the Burlington, it exceeded in importance over Hemingford. Another county seat election was held and 1899 and Alliance won. The courthouse was moved to its new home by rail. In 1914, a new county courthouse (BX01-063) was erected in Alliance.³²

The settlement of Box Butte County was strongly tied to the passage of three federal legislative acts intended to encourage homesteaders. First, the 1862 Homestead Act allocated 160 acres of land for settlers who were required to work in the area for a specified period of time. Second, the 1873 Timber Culture Act granted 160 acres for settlers who would plant and nurture tree seedlings on barren land. As a result of these first two acts, the first settler to enter the county, A.H. McLaughlin, filed a homestead and a tree claim in 1881. Four years later, a significant influx of settlers began to take advantage of the large quantity of land and by 1890, the population of the county had reached 5,494. By the next decade,

³¹ Michael P. Conzen, ed., *The Making of the American Landscape* (Winchester, MA: Unwin Hyman, Inc., 1990), 182-184.

³² Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 9-11; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County*, (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), Chronological Index.

settlers were still entering the area in relatively high numbers and the land office in Alliance reported the filing of eighty-five homesteads in a one month period. The third piece of legislation, the 1904 Kinkaid Act, provided homesteaders with 640 acres as incentive to settle in northwestern and north central Nebraska.³³

After an announcement of land opened for entry appeared in June of 1905, the *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* reported:³⁴

As early as Saturday applicants arrived and took stations adjacent to the rear door of the opera house, in which the land office is located. More arrived Sunday. All camped right there during the night. Yesterday all were assigned their respective numbers, which reached a total of sixty-seven...Each applicant was allowed to enter 640 acres...Among the applicants were five ladies.

In 1905, one year after the passage of the Kinkaid Act, 468 farms consuming 245,298 acres of land were reported in the county. During that year, the planted acres of spring crops included 5,252 in potatoes, 4,463 in corn, 3,025 in barley, 2,766 in oats, 2,721 in wheat, 1,616 in millet, 447 in speltz, 372 in rye, 279 in alfalfa, and 602 in tame grass. These farmsteads also accommodated 21,621 cattle, 8,524 sheep, 2,800 horses and mules, and 666 hogs. Four years later, Kinkaid entries were still being filed at the land office in Alliance. In the last month of 1909, 69 applications which totaled 30,298 acres were filed. Due to all of the homestead activity, in 1910, Box Butte County reported a population of 6,131.³⁵

As a result of World War I, Box Butte County experienced a prosperous period with a considerable increase in land sales. Between 1916 and 1920, the demand for agricultural products increased and the government requested the aid of farmers to meet the need. During this time, the production of wheat became very lucrative, and prices reached as high as two dollars a bushel. A variety of people working in other professions jumped on the band wagon and purchased land for farms. This activity resulted in increased land values in

³³ Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 18; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939) 30-31; Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska, 1886-1986* N.p., 6; "Business is Lively....," *Alliance Times* 13 April 1900; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782.

³⁴ "Busy at Land Office," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 13 June 1905.

³⁵ "Box Butte Boiled Down," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 23 June 1905; "Land Business," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 14 January 1910; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782;

the county with the highest value reported at \$150 per acre. By 1920, 643 farmers were working their own property in Box Butte County, and another 181 people were renting land. This resulted in a total of 639,220 acres utilized by farmers. Out of this figure, 176,607 acres were under cultivation and of those, 1,786 were irrigated. Over the next decade, with the advent of advanced farming machinery, crop production remained high. By 1925, Box Butte County grew seventeen percent of the state's potato crop, which sold for approximately two cents per potato. During this boom period between 1910 and 1930, the population of the county skyrocketed from 8,407 to 11,861.³⁶

Due to the heightened crop production and use of trucks to haul goods to market, the condition of area roads became an issue by the second decade of the twentieth century. As early as 1915, the roads in Box Butte County were reported in adequate shape to accommodate farmers. During 1915, in an effort to maintain the roads, farmers and business people donated



FIGURE 5 - POTATO FIELD, RURAL BOX BUTTE COUNTY, CIRCA 1930, KNIGHT MUSEUM

two days during the summer to improve surface conditions. Downtown business people even locked their doors for an afternoon to help the cause. By the mid-1920s, Box Butte County reported four hundred miles of graded road and served in the forefront of road development in the panhandle. In 1925, the Denver to Deadwood Trail and the Potash Highway, which were both under construction and passed through Alliance, were designated as part of the national highway system. During that year, money was also expended on improving the Angora Highway, which connected Bridgeport and Alliance.³⁷

³⁶ "County Agricultural Report is Completed," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 5 October 1920; *Northwestern Nebraska* (Chicago, IL: Poole Bros, u.d.), 15; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), Chronological Index, 97-98; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782.

³⁷ "All Roads Lead to Alliance and All Roads are Good," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 30 July 1915; "Alliance Men Will Work on the County Roads This Week," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 27 July 1915; "Will Close Stores," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 27 July 1915; "Box Butte Leads in Graded Roads in Recent Years," *Alliance Times and Herald* 24 July 1925; "Will Recognize Federal Roads Thru Alliance," *Alliance Times and Herald* 18 December 1925; "Making Progress on the Angora Highway," *Alliance Times and Herald* 18 September 1925.

The financial burden of World War I on the country and an overabundance of cultivated commodities contributed to the arrival of the Great Depression. By 1930, the depression had



FIGURE 6 - ALLIANCE MUNICIPAL BUILDING (BX01-041), ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1940, KNIGHT MUSEUM

impacted Box Butte County as a result of lowered agricultural prices. One year later, a severe drought caused the closing of several financial institutions. After the passing of another year, prices for farm products had devalued, and the area welfare reservoirs were depleted. This situation, which was similar to the rest of the country, prompted the election of

Franklin Delano Roosevelt as President of the United States. In 1933, Roosevelt assumed office and began implementing his New Deal programs. Box Butte County benefitted from work performed by one of these programs known as the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Projects completed by the WPA included erecting the Alliance Municipal Building (BX01-041); refurbishing schoolhouses; repaving streets; constructing curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; improving the Box Butte County Fairgrounds (BX04-026); elongating the Alliance Airport landing field (BX00-014); erecting an eight-plane hangar; installing water mains; improving the city park (BX01-067); and cataloging and repairing library books. Even with this federal assistance, Box Butte County continued to experience hard times due to drought and insect plagues in 1934, 1935, and 1939. In 1935, the number of families on relief in the county peaked at 453, an additional 201 over the previous year's high.³⁸

As with the rest of the country, World War II was the catalyst to finally pull Box Butte County out of economic hardship. In 1942, the government established the Alliance Army Air Base southeast of the city. The formation of the base required additional construction

³⁸ In 1934, Box Butte County only received 8.78 inches of rain, which was 45 percent less than the previous year. "Seven Inches Less Rain in this Territory During 1934," *Alliance Times and Herald* 4 January 1935; Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), Chronological Index; "Accomplishments of WPA in Box Butte County Reviewed," *Alliance Times and Herald* 9 April 1940; "County's Relief Burden Has Reached New Record," *Alliance Times and Herald* 15 January 1935.

services to be provided by the community. This increased the workforce in Alliance and resulted in a housing shortage. Local businesses flourished and the economy of Box Butte County boomed. Again, farmers in the region were expected to produce large quantities of agricultural products to support the war effort. Due to the prosperity, the population of the county increased from 10,736 in 1940 to 12,279 in 1950.³⁹

The post-war population growth might also be attributed to a special section in the 1945 *Alliance Times and Herald* entitled "Box Butte County Farm Homes." The newspaper intended to entice farmers to move to Box Butte County, and contained photographs of area farms, biographies of the owners, types of farm products raised, and a list of facilities on each property. A standard caption read: "If you are looking for a post-war location where there are good opportunities for honest returns for honest effort you will find no better spot on earth than Box Butte County, Nebraska."

As a result of diversification and new technology, Box Butte County continued to flourish after the war. In 1945, the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) began surveying Box Butte County in an effort to provide electricity to the rural areas. During that year, a total of three thousand dollars was awarded to the panhandle to provide electric lines to 386 rural customers. Besides lighting the farmsteads, the power lines also supported pump irrigation in the county. In 1945, fifty-five pump irrigation wells fed water to a total of eleven thousand acres in Box Butte County. Due to better farming methods, the number of farms decreased in the county, and the farm sizes increased. While in 1935, 932 farms stretched across 638,458 acres, one decade later 702 farms utilized 680,586 acres. In the 1950s, Box Butte County again experienced change with the expanded use of center-pivot irrigation. Besides farming, the railroad industry continued to thrive and brought a large number of employees into the area in the 1980s. Population surges occurred between 1970 and 1980 with a jump from 10,094 to 13,696.⁴⁰

³⁹ Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 26-28; Lawrence H. Larsen, "The Alliance Army Air Base Case," *Nebraska History* 67 (Fall 1986): 239; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782.

⁴⁰ "REA Survey is Starting," *Alliance Times and Herald* 6 November 1945; "REA Loan is Received By Local Group," *Alliance Times and Herald* 7 September 1945; "City Power Extension is Made Real," *Alliance Times and Herald* 27 March 1945; "Pump Irrigation is Here to Stay," *Alliance Times and Herald* 6 November 1945; "Farm Trend is Toward Large Units," *Alliance Times and Herald* 31 July 1945; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 34; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782.

Box Butte County, traversed as early as 1876 via the Sidney-Deadwood Trail, did not undergo settlement until a decade later. Significant county development did not occur



FIGURE 7 - BOX BUTTE COUNTY FARMERS, 1949, RURAL BOX BUTTE COUNTY, KNIGHT MUSEUM

until the arrival of the Burlington railroad in 1888. The economy of Box Butte County has continually been related to ranching and farming in addition to the availability of railroad transportation. Although relatively low in relation to its physical area, the county's population growth has remained fairly steady throughout its history.

BOX BUTTE COUNTY POPULATION STATISTICS ⁴¹											
year	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
people	5,494	5,572	6,131	8,407	11,861	10,736	12,279	11,688	10,094	13,696	13,130

⁴¹ Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 782.

BOX BUTTE COUNTY VILLAGES, TOWNS AND CITIES

ALLIANCE

Alliance is located in the southeast section of Box Butte County along State Highway 2 and U.S. Highway 385. Alliance evolved due to its location along the tracks of the Burlington Railroad. In 1886, a post office was established in the vicinity and was named Bronco. One year later the community of Grand Lake, north of present-day Alliance was established. Eventually Alliance replaced the two fledgling communities and prospered as an agricultural market and a railroad division point.⁴²

The development of Alliance revolved around activities of a Burlington affiliated land company. At a public auction in 1887, the Lincoln Land Company purchased most of Section 36, Township 25, Range 48, to serve as a junction of Burlington railroad lines. J.H. Sigafos outbid the land company for forty acres in this section, which he later developed into South Alliance. Following this auction, people traveled to Box Butte County to capitalize on the development of a railroad town. To their disappointment, the Lincoln Land Company neither surveyed the area nor parted with any of its holdings. During this time, however, a Civil War veteran leased land from his claim located on the outskirts of the property owned by the Lincoln Land Company. By the summer of 1887, the village of Grand Lake underwent construction on the veteran's property, near the present-day location of the intersection of Third and Grand streets. On 27 January 1888, railroad tracks were laid up to the property held by the Lincoln Land Company which prompted the sale of lots one month later. Shortly thereafter, buildings from Grand Lake were moved into the hub of the community just north of the new tracks.⁴³

G.W. Holdrege, Superintendent of the Burlington, selected the new name of Alliance for the community for four reasons. First, he feared Grand Lake might be mistaken for Grand Island, Nebraska. Second, Holdrege wanted to choose a name that was uncomplicated and

⁴² Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 19.

⁴³ "Early History of South Alliance is Given By I.E. Tash," *Alliance Times and Herald* 23 October 1925; Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 19-20; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 4.

alphabetically at the forefront. Third, an engineer on the line came from Alliance, Ohio. Fourth, the moniker adequately designated its position as an interchange.⁴⁴

Strong business activity in Alliance during its first decade of existence resulted because it was the closest railroad stop for people living in the North Platte Valley. Furthermore, since Alliance was a passenger and freight division point for the Burlington, area farmers expanded cultivation of potatoes and wheat while ranchers increased their herds. In the summer of 1888, the bustling community of Alliance underwent incorporation as a village. Over the next several months, approximately 250 buildings were constructed to accommodate the commercial needs of the area farmers and ranchers. Between 1890-1891,

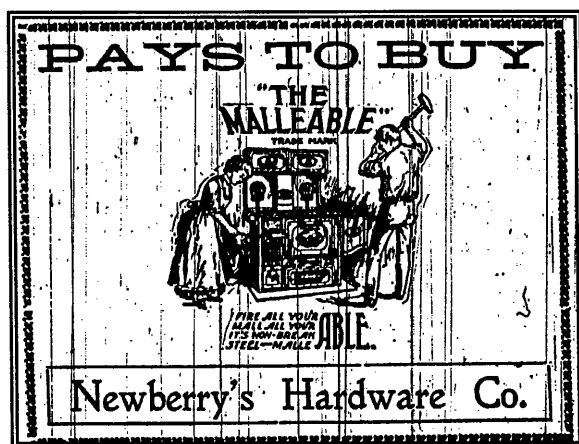


FIGURE 8 - NEWBERRY'S HARDWARE COMPANY ADVERTISEMENT, *ALLIANCE SEMI-WEEKLY TIMES*, 4 FEBRUARY 1910

the business district included hardware stores, hotels, restaurants, newspapers, saloons, banks, brick makers, attorneys, and physicians, a land office, milling company, livery, blacksmiths, harness shop, millinery, wagon maker, cigar factory, and tailor.⁴⁵

Several setbacks experienced by Alliance in the early 1890s resulted in municipal improvements. In a two year period, from 1892 to 1893, Alliance suffered three catastrophic fires. As a result, by the summer of 1893, the Alliance fire department was aided by a new water

system and tower. Furthermore, the passage of an ordinance regarding mandatory use of fireproof building materials resulted in many business owners contracting with the new brick factory for construction needs. During that same year, Alliance underwent incorporation as a second class city on 8 April 1893. In 1896, the population of Alliance leaped to 2,220. This figure increased by 1,380 over the 1890 census. In 1899, Alliance triumphed over

⁴⁴ Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 16; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 4.

⁴⁵ Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 16; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 17; Mae Manion, comp., "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 21-22.

Hemingford for the designation as county seat. By the turn of the century, Alliance housed both an electric company and a branch of the Auburn Telephone Construction Company.⁴⁶

In the 1910s and 1920s, Alliance experienced significant construction. This was a result of a population boom from 3,105 in 1910 to 6,669 residents in 1930. Due to a shortage of lots and homes, area residents took various actions to solve the problem. In 1915, the Fairview Addition was platted with two blocks divided, each into twelve lots. Five years later, Brown's Addition was platted by M.A. Brown. This addition included sixty lots measuring fifty by 112 feet. The cost of these lots ranged from \$125 and \$275. Other problem-solving attempts included the formation of the Alliance Home Builders Association to alleviate the housing shortage. In 1920, the *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* reported thirty houses under construction and twelve moved from Antioch, as well as city street paving totaling one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Additionally, the Burlington announced the construction of one hundred thousand dollars worth of new facilities in Alliance. Five years later, in 1925 approximately two hundred thousand dollars worth of construction was undertaken in Alliance, including the erection of ten homes.⁴⁷



FIGURE 9 - REDDISH HOUSE (BXO 1-061), GABLED-ELL WITH QUEEN ANNE STYLE INFLUENCE, 834 LARAMIE AVENUE, ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1910, KNIGHT MUSEUM

⁴⁶ Jane Graff, coord., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 16; Centennial Committee *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 6, 8; Clarence H. Hoper, *Annual Report of the City Manager, Alliance, Nebraska* (N.p., 1937), 12.

⁴⁷ Addison E. Sheldon, ed., *The Nebraska Blue Book and Historical Register, 1920* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1920), 388; Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, *The Nebraska Blue Book, 1930* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1930), 333; "Fair Association Will Sell Many Valuable Residence Lots to Highest Bidder, October 20," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 3 September 1915; "Big Opportunity Offered to Buy Fine City Lots," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 24 August 1920; "Many New Homes in Alliance Last Year," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 4 January 1921; "Moving Many Houses Here From Antioch," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 6 July 1920; "Long Leap Taken in Building For Alliance in Year," *Alliance Times and Herald* 1 January 1926.

The residential neighbor-hoods in Alliance grew around the downtown in a horse shoe-shaped pattern, extending to the west, north, and east, with the Burlington facilities to the

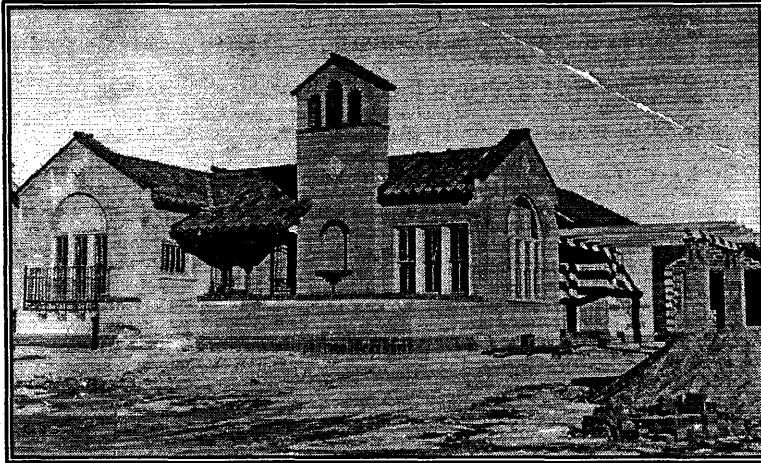


FIGURE 10 - SALLOWS HOUSE (BX01-008), SPANISH REVIVAL STYLE, 931 CHEYENNE AVENUE, ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1930, KNIGHT MUSEUM

south side and the commercial area cutting northward through the middle. These residential areas displayed a grid pattern with streets running east-west and north-south. The most elaborate, high style houses in the city were located on the north and west fringes of downtown. Extant architectural styles found in Alliance include Queen Anne (BX01-055), Neo-Classical Revival (BX01-044), American

Foursquare (BX01-045), Dutch Colonial Revival (BX01-005), Spanish Revival (BX01-008), and Bungalow (BX01-099). However, a majority of the houses built in Alliance into the first decades of the twentieth century displayed vernacular forms, such as one and two-story cubes (BX01-090; BX01-149), front and side gables (BX01-013; BX01-086), and gable Ts (BX01-078). Construction materials found on these homes included weatherboard, wood shingles, brick, and stucco. These houses reflected the relative prosperity of Alliance in its first several decades.⁴⁸

Though Alliance, much like the remainder of the country suffered during the Great Depression, it had a strong infrastructure which enabled it to endure the hard times. In 1921, Alliance revamped its form of government and was run by a council-manager system per state law. In the 1930s, after a decade of governing, this body was firmly established. In 1931 the city owned its water and light plant, boasted 107 paved blocks of streets, featured seventy-five blocks of street lights, and supported two high schools, three grade schools, and a private boarding school. The Burlington's monthly payroll in Alliance that year was one hundred thousand dollars, and the city's banks boasted nearly \$3.6 million in deposits. During the 1930s, Alliance became a regional center for potato cultivation. It also had a

⁴⁸ Since a large number of residential buildings were identified during the survey, this paragraph only contains representative examples of houses. The majority of the houses in this section were derived from the list of potentially eligible individual properties in Alliance.

creamery which ranked third in employment relative to other Alliance industries. Finally, Alliance also continued to rely on the profits from cattle ranching.⁴⁹

During the Great Depression, both the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided employment in various projects that benefitted the community. In 1935, Alliance received a Public Works Administration grant for the construction of water tanks and mains and 171 street lights, as well as WPA assistance in city park improvements and street, curb, and gutter projects. By 1940, a listing of WPA accomplishments in the *Alliance Times and Herald* also reported the construction of sidewalks, street lighting, improvements to water mains, and construction at the Alliance Airport.⁵⁰



FIGURE 11 - ALLIANCE ARMY AIR BASE, ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1942, KNIGHT MUSEUM

The entry of the United States into World War II directly impacted the economy of Alliance. In May 1942, Alliance procured 3,265 acres for an army air base. Upon completion, 775 buildings and elongated runways and taxiways occupied the grounds of the base. Alliance was selected as a base site due to its power sources, sewer and water mains, inexpensive land, moderate weather conditions, the efforts of Senator George W. Norris, and its proximity to the sand hills which could be used for parachute and ammunition training. Alliance was one of eleven Nebraska sites chosen for army bases. By 1943, a

⁴⁹ Roberts Whitcomb Laing, *Legend and Memory* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1979), 8-9; Clarence H. Hoper, *Annual Report of the City Manager, Alliance, Nebraska* (N.p., 1937), 12; Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 24; "Alliance Largest Box Butte Co. Town Shows A Permanent Growth," *Alliance Times and Herald* 9 June 1931.

⁵⁰ "23 WPA Projects Ready For Start," *Alliance Times and Herald* 27 September 1935; "Alliance's Second Major Project Ready For Bids," *Alliance Times and Herald* 22 November 1935; "Hemingford Must Give Approval to PWA Bond Issue," *Alliance Times and Herald* 8 October 1935; "Accomplishments of WPA in Box Butte County Reviewed," *Alliance Times and Herald* 9 April 1940.

twofold increase in Alliance's population resulted in a housing shortage which meant people lived in garages, basements, and even chicken coops, necessitating the need to construct more housing.⁵¹

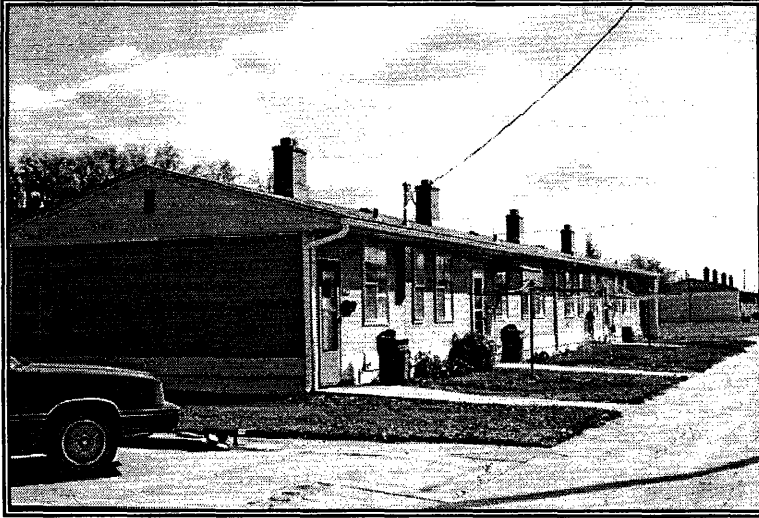


FIGURE 12 - CHIMNEY TOWN (BX01-193), ALLIANCE, NESHPO, 1995

Alliance turned to the federal government for help with its housing shortage. In 1943, the Federal Public Housing Administration erected a housing complex for war-related workers known as Chimney Town (BX01-191 to BX01-195). The development, consisting of 192 units, was named for the multiple brick chimneys which rose above the flat roofs. These

apartments, divided into six units each, were arranged on the east side of Alliance along Lane One through Lane Four. One year after construction, as a result of the declining war effort, the number of residents at Chimney Town began to decrease. However, in July of 1945, the Alliance Army Air Field was redeployed with the First Troop Carrier Command. On 31 October 1945, the Troop Carrier Command "deactivated" the Alliance Army Air Base. Following World War II, Chimney Town was available to veterans. In 1953, the Alliance City Council secured ownership of the land associated with the present-day Alliance Municipal Airport. In the early 1960s, Chimney Town became the Good Samaritan Village, a housing facility for the elderly, and by the end of the decade many of the buildings had been renovated with side gable roofs.⁵²

⁵¹ It is of note that the 507 Parachute Infantry Regiment that trained at the Alliance Army Air Base was later attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. The regiment landed in France only hours before the D-Day landings on June 6, 1944, and many casualties were known personally to the people of Alliance from that historic event. Centennial Committee, *City of Alliance and Box Butte County Nebraska* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 26-28; Lawrence H. Larsen, "The Alliance Army Air Base Case," *Nebraska History* 67 (Fall 1986): 239; Roberts Whitcomb Laing, *Legend and Memory* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1979), 35.

⁵² Centennial Committee. *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska*. (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 29, 41-42; Lawrence H. Larsen, "The Alliance Army Air Base Case," 67 *Nebraska History* (Fall 1986): 253.

In 1950 the population of Alliance was 7,891. This figure was 1,638 people larger than the 1940 census. In 1970, Alliance reported a slight decline in its population with 6,862 people residing within its limits. In the 1980s, with heightened Burlington Railroad activity, the population again increased and by 1990, 9,765 people lived in Alliance.⁵³

Alliance developed as a railroad town along the tracks of the Burlington Railroad. Its importance as a commercial center and shipping point was recognized early by area farmers and ranchers. Although the community experienced setbacks with the onset of the Great Depression, the establishment of an army air base southeast of Alliance during World War II allowed for a full recovery. In 1996, Alliance continues to flourish as a division point along the Burlington line and a regional trade center.

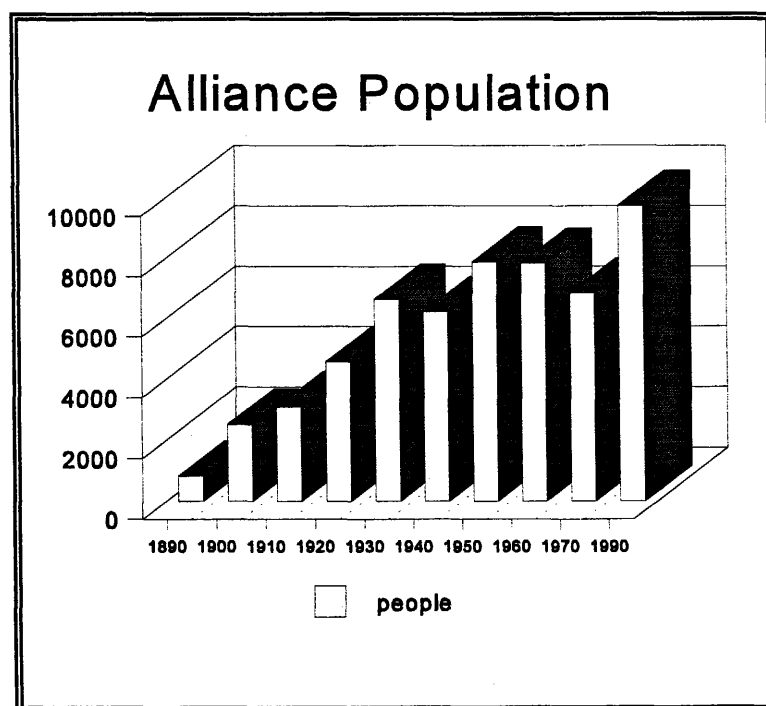


FIGURE 13 - POPULATION STATISTICS FOR ALLIANCE

⁵³ Nebraska Legislative Council, *The Nebraska Blue Book*, 1940 (Lincoln, NE, December, 1942), 303; Nebraska Legislative Council, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book*, 1952 (Lincoln, NE, December, 1952), 355; Nebraska Legislative Council, *The Nebraska Blue Book*, 1972 (Lincoln, NE, December, 1972), 639; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book*, 1990-1991 (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 800.

BEREA

Berea is located approximately ten miles northwest of the county seat of Alliance, in the central part of Box Butte County. It is located west of State Highway 2 and the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks, halfway between Hemingford and Alliance.

In 1889, the railroad first reached the area of Berea. This event led to the erection of railroad facilities such as a section house. The first group of settlers moved into the area from the state of Ohio and named it after their hometown. The name Berea originates from an "ancient city in Macedonia." Due to a drought in the county, the Ohio settlers relocated and eventually a group from Iowa came to Berea. In 1890-1891, with a population of fifty, the community housed a general store, newspaper, and post office. Five years later, Berea had enough residents to open a school and construct a community hall.⁵⁴



FIGURE 14 - BOX BUTTE COUNTY GRAIN HARVEST, CIRCA 1910, KNIGHT MUSEUM

In 1910, Berea continued to serve as a shipping stop for grain along the Burlington tracks. During a six-month period, a single area farmer brought in six carloads of grain for rail transportation. One of the largest loads, totaling eighty-two bushels, was brought to Berea by P.J. Knapp. Although there have never been many commercial enterprises in Berea, Tibbit's Berea Garage (BX02-004) opened for business in 1921,

providing repair service on autos and farming implements. Berea's livelihood fluctuated and, due to its increased importance as a stop along the rails, a post office was reopened in 1925. The village's thirty-five residents also utilized a four-room schoolhouse and a general

⁵⁴ Mae Manion, comp., "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 32; "Box Butte County," File: Alliance and Surrounding Counties Located at the Slagle Memorial Library, Alliance, NE; "Berea News," Alliance Times 25 January 1895.

store. One year later, the post office was terminated. In 1935, an emphasis was again placed on Berea when the Utility Petroleum Company of Chadron purchased a re- finery plant in the community and reopened the industry. In 1960, the population of Berea was reported at seventy-five.⁵⁵

Berea, which lacks a commercial district, has many unpaved streets. The most significant property surveyed in Berea was a large grain elevator (BX02-002) located on the east side of the Burlington tracks. The only commercial property surveyed was the abandoned, one-story brick Tibbit's Berea Garage (BX02-004) located along the highway. Other properties inventoried included a gable roof, vernacular church (BX02-001) and a one-story, side gable vernacular house (BX02-003).

Population statistics for Berea are not listed in the *Nebraska Blue Book*, and it is difficult to trace the community's population fluctuations.

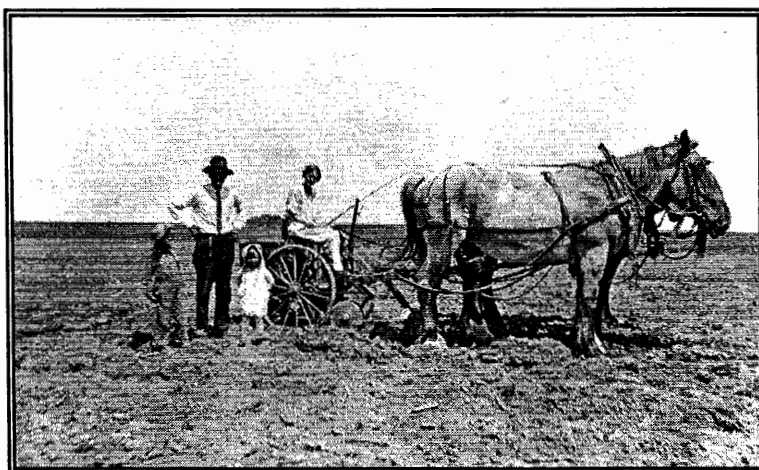


FIGURE 15 - BOX BUTTE COUNTY FARM FAMILY, CIRCA 1920s, KNIGHT MUSEUM

⁵⁵ "Berea," *Alliance Semi Weekly Times* 25 January 1910; "Berea Thriving Community is Headquarters for the Farmer," *Alliance Times-Herald* 9 June 1931; "Building Activity in Hemingford Vicinity," *Alliance Times and Herald* 23 June 1925; "Berea Refinery to Operate Every Day," *Alliance Times and Herald* 2 August 1935; Elton A. Perkey, "Perkey's Names of Nebraska Locations," *Nebraska History* 58 (Fall 1978): 458.

HEMINGFORD

Hemingford is located in the north central portion of Box Butte County. State Highways 2 and 87 merge in the community and run along Niobrara Avenue. Hemingford, known as a center for wheat, potatoes, and cattle, also houses the seventy-five acre Box Butte County Fairgrounds, which was established in 1925 (BX04-026).⁵⁶

As early as 1885, settlers began occupying the area of present-day Hemingford. One year later, a post office began operating to accommodate the new residents. Joseph and Louisa Hare were recognized as the earliest settlers to construct the first house, built of sod, in the community. The village's first school was constructed of frame in 1886. The name Hemingford was acquired from "Hemmings Ford" in Quebec, Canada, the hometown of many of the residents.⁵⁷

On 4 May 1886, the Hemingford Town Company was established. It eventually sold its property to the Lincoln Land Company, a subsidiary of the Burlington Railroad. In 1887, the community was incorporated and by the next year twelve buildings, most constructed of sod, were located in the town. Three years later, Burlington tracks reached the community.⁵⁸

In 1890, following an election, Hemingford secured the title of county seat from Nonpareil. In order to gain this status Hemingford had entered into an agreement with the county confirming that if selected, it would sell a piece of land to the county for a dollar, build a courthouse, and defray the cost of the special election and the transfer of county records. In 1896, the *Alliance Times* began running articles regarding the need for the county seat to be moved to Alliance. These articles detailed how Hemingford was declining in population

⁵⁶ Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska, 1886-1986* N.p., 6; *The Ledger Hemingford Centennial Special Edition*, May 1987: 44.

⁵⁷ "Hemingford First School in 1885," *The Ledger Hemingford Centennial Special Edition*, May 1987; Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska, 1886-1986* n.p., 7; Mae Manion, comp., "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 14; Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 20.

⁵⁸ Mae Manion, comp., "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 14; Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...The Panhandle* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1988), 20.

since families were leaving the community, a "graveyard of human hopes," in large numbers. Three years later, Alliance secured the title of county seat.⁵⁹

In the early 1890s, while still county seat, Hemingford offered several merchandise stores, banks, agriculture implement shops, drug stores, hardware stores, milliners, blacksmiths, a saloon, real estate office, jewelry and candy store, shoemaker, lumber yard, hotel, meat market, harness maker, and livery. In 1894, the village contracted with a company to install a water system. During this decade, another advancement occurred with the establishment of a creamery.⁶⁰

A photograph of Hemingford, dated circa 1906, shows the main thoroughfare lined with frame, false front buildings. These buildings stood between one and two-stories tall. The most ornate building, located on the west side of the street, featured a corner tower. A water tank and a windmill were located at the north end of the downtown near

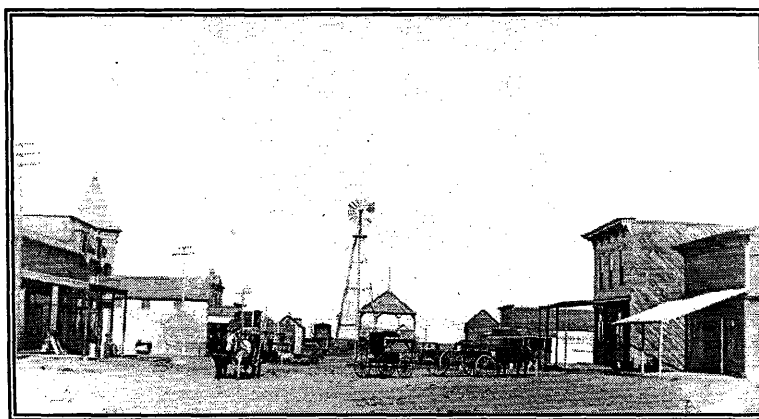


FIGURE 16 - DOWNTOWN HEMINGFORD, CIRCA 1906,
KNIGHT MUSEUM

the railroad tracks. A wooden bandstand was located in the center of the commercial center and provided a social setting for the community.

Shortly after the turn of the century Hemingford offered its residents four daily passenger trains, as well as over twenty businesses providing goods and services to the community. Hemingford also provided electricity and several fire departments. Many of the businesses were affected by two significant fires. In 1910, a fire in the business district destroyed eleven buildings and resulted in a loss of fifty thousand dollars in property. Ten years later,

⁵⁹ "That the Depopulation of Hemingford....," *Alliance Times* 14 February 1896; Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 15-16.

⁶⁰ Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska 1886-1986* n.p., 7; Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 15; "Box Butte County," File: *Alliance and Surrounding Counties*, Located at the Slagle Memorial Library, Alliance, NE.

another fire ripped through the downtown. It destroyed six buildings and resulted in at least seventy-five thousand dollars worth of property damage.⁶¹

In the 1920s, a number of modern amenities were available in Hemingford. A brick high school (BX04-008) was constructed in 1926. One year later, several of the primary streets in town were graveled. Two years later, the community had access to round-the-clock



FIGURE 17 - HEMINGFORD, LOOKING SOUTH FROM ELEVATOR, CIRCA 1925, NSHS

telephone service and a new sewer system. During the mid-1920s, businesses offering goods and services in Hemingford included O.W. Andrew Market, Mike Saba General Merchandise, Miller Auto Company, Farmers State Bank, Shindler's Hardware (BX04-039), Farmers Lumber Company, George A. Cotton Druggist, G.C. Bain Harness & Shoe Repairs, Commercial Hotel

and Cafe, and Farmers Union Store/Groceries. By the end of the decade, Hemingford had the best Burlington "car lot shipping record" for agricultural produce. In 1930, Hemingford's population reached a peak of 1,025.⁶²

In the 1930s, similar to the rest of the country, Hemingford was affected by the Great Depression. One of the strongest indications regarding the financial troubles experienced in Hemingford was the loss of twenty-three businesses in the first three years of the decade.⁶³ In an effort toward economic recovery, Hemingford took advantage of the federally instituted New Deal programs. In 1935, at a total cost of \$1,232, the Works Progress Administration

⁶¹ Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska, 1886-1986* N.p., 7; "Hemingford Has Fire," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 18 February 1910; "Fire Destroys Six Buildings at Hemingford," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 16 July 1920.

⁶² Edna Clark, comp., *Hemingford, Nebraska, 1886-1986* N.p., 7-8; "Hemingford First School in 1885," *The Ledger Hemingford Centennial Special Edition*, May 1987; "Spend Decoration Day in Hemingford," *Alliance Times and Herald* 29 May 1925; Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, *The Nebraska Blue Book, 1930* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1930), 336.

⁶³ Anna N. Phillips and Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: Houchen Bindery Ltd., 1939), 108.

(WPA) improved the streets of Hemingford with crushed rock on Niobrara Avenue, Ogallala Avenue, Custer Street, and Cheyenne Avenue.⁶⁴

The layout of Hemingford resembles a typical railroad town in Nebraska, displaying a T-plan. The east-west and north-south streets were arranged in a grid pattern and intersect with the tracks, which ran from southeast to northwest through the northeast corner of Hemingford, to form 45 degree and 135 degree angles. As typified by the T-plan, the Burlington depot was located east of the intersection of Box Butte Avenue and the railroad tracks. Furthermore, other railroad-related facilities, such as water tanks and grain elevators, were allocated land on the north side of the tracks.,

All of the commercial and residential development in Hemingford occurred south of the tracks. The commercial district ran approximately two blocks south of the tracks on Box Butte Avenue and one block east and west on Niobrara Avenue from its intersection with Box Butte Avenue. A variety of commerce related properties were inventoried in Hemingford during the

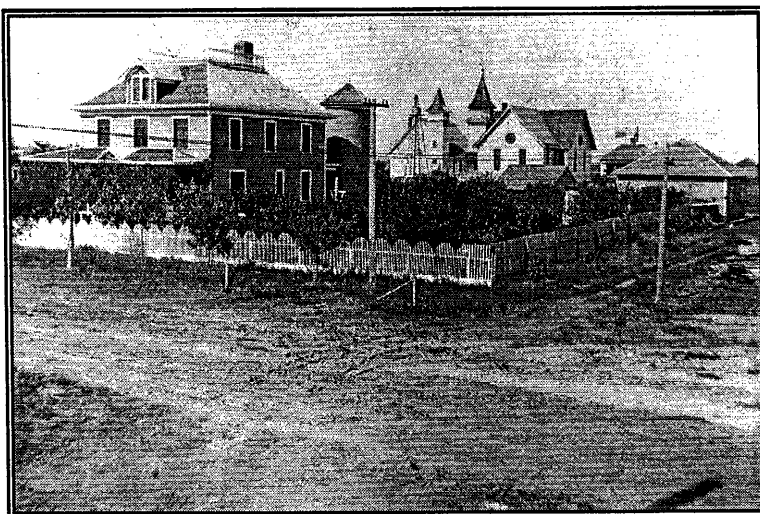


FIGURE 18 - RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD IN HEMINGFORD, CIRCA 1910, KNIGHT MUSEUM

NeHBS, including two frame lumberyard buildings (BX04-036; BX04-050), ten commercial buildings, and two garages (BX04-035; BX04-048). Most of these buildings, which stand one to two-stories tall (BX04-038; BX04-043), exhibit twentieth century commercial vernacular form. Common features include brick construction, corbeling, sills, and lintels (BX04-037).

The residential section of Hemingford is located to the south and west of the downtown. Typical architectural forms and styles found in this area include vernacular one-story cubes (BX04-019), side gables (BX04-027), front gables (BX04-022), and Bungalows (BX04-021). The largest residence in the community is a two and one-half-story, Queen Anne style building (BX04-051). It displays multiple steeply pitched gables, fishscales, and a

⁶⁴ "Hemingford Plans Much Street Work," *Alliance Times and Herald* 5 November 1935.

semicircular window. In the residential area, the most significant property surveyed was the vernacular 1926 Congregational Church (BX04-032), which exhibited an arched doorway with a keystone, concrete string course, and a triangular pediment.

Hemingford has experienced significant fluctuations in its population. Between 1910 and 1930, its population jumped from 272 to 1,025. During the Great Depression, people moved from Hemingford in large numbers and the 1940 census was listed at 792. In 1990, Hemingford reported its second highest population at 953.⁶⁵

Hemingford's early history as the county seat, its importance as home to the county fair and as a potato shipping center, has long established the town as an important community in Box Butte County's history. It continues to thrive today as an important railroad stop and commercial center for county residents.

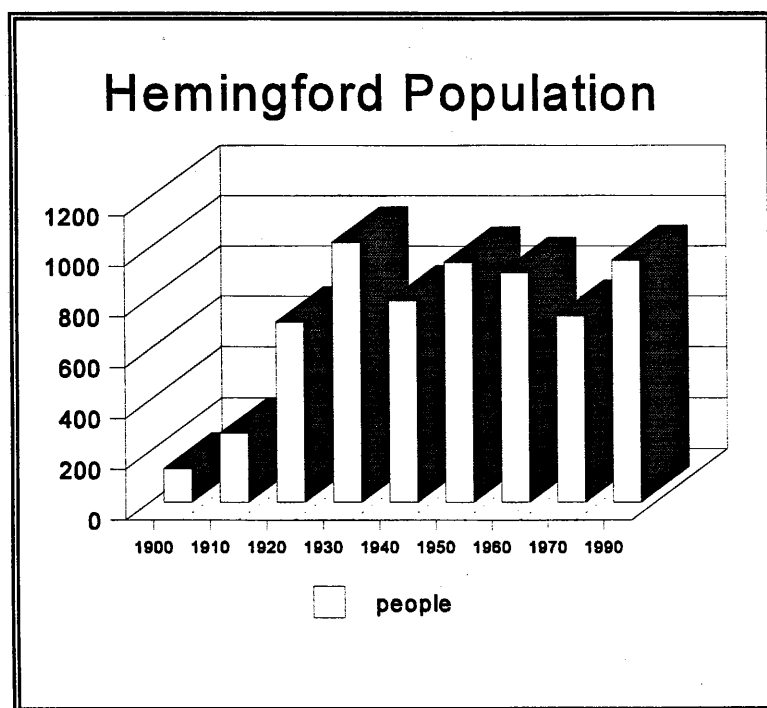


FIGURE 19 - POPULATION STATISTICS FOR HEMINGFORD

⁶⁵ Addison E. Sheldon, ed., *The Nebraska Blue Book and Historical Register, 1920* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1920), 394; Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, *The Nebraska Blue Book, 1930* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1930), 336; Nebraska Legislative Council, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1942* (Lincoln, NE, December, 1942), 306; Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 800.

III

ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA

INTRODUCTION

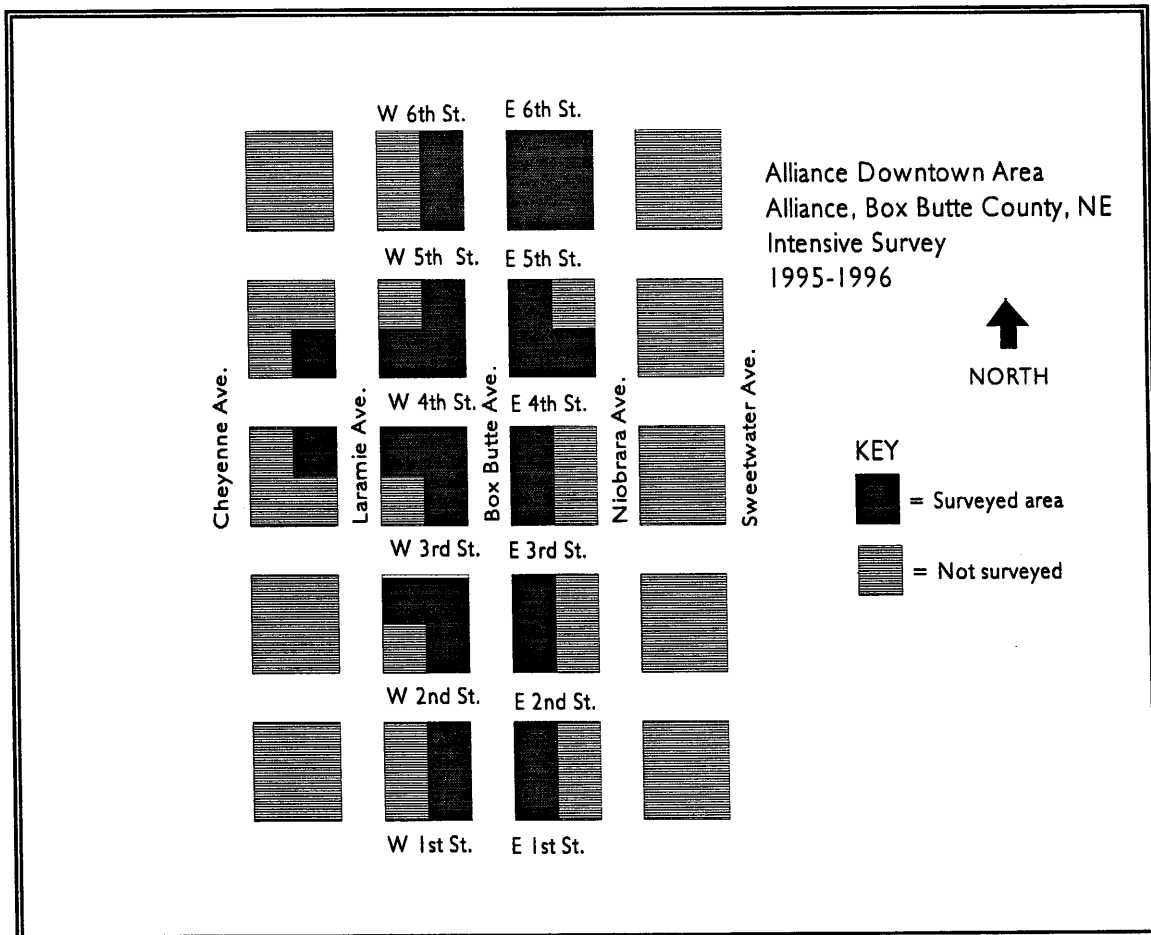


FIGURE 20 - ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA, BOUNDARIES OF NEHBS INTENSIVE SURVEY AREA, 1995

Alliance, located in the center of the Nebraska panhandle, has served as a division point for the Burlington Railroad for almost one hundred years. The community has a population of 9,765 and serves as a commercial center for at least a twenty-five-mile radius.⁶⁶ The hub of Alliance's downtown stretches approximately five blocks along Box Butte Avenue and radiates approximately one block to the east and west on Third and Fourth streets. An intensive survey of the commercial area was a component of the NeHBS of Box Butte County. This thematic study included identifying architecturally and historically significant commercial buildings in the downtown. Further, each intensively-surveyed building was assigned a survey number, photographed, mapped, recorded on a field survey form, and a sketch map was drawn for each property.

Resources regarding the construction dates and historic names for buildings located in the Alliance Commercial Area are located in the NeSHPO site files. These files, which are identified by survey numbers are located at the Nebraska State Historical Society in Lincoln, Nebraska.

In the following narrative, surveyed buildings are identified by their NeHBS site number (ie: BX01-00). If no site number or other information follows the mention of a particular building, either the building is not extant or not enough information was available to determine its existence.

The commercial area of Alliance is a grouping of sixty-seven properties within a six and one-half block area, located approximately in the south central portion of the city of Alliance. It represents the historic and current central business district (CBD) of the city. Key anchor properties within the CBD include the Box Butte County Courthouse, Slagle Memorial Library, the Alliance Municipal Building, the Newberry Building, and the Times-Herald Building.

In circa 1920, east-west streets in downtown Alliance were renamed to numbered avenues, while the north-south streets retained their names. The following table provides the historic and current street names in the Alliance commercial area.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Clerk of the Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book, 1990-1991* (Lincoln, NE, 1990), 800.

⁶⁷ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map of Alliance, Nebraska* (1910; 1920).

PRE-1920 STREET NAMES	POST-1920 STREET NAMES
Railroad	First Street
Dakota	Second Street
Wyoming	Third Street
Montana	Fourth Street
Idaho	Fifth Street
Oregon	Sixth Street

BRIEF HISTORY OF ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA

Alliance, which was platted by the Lincoln Land Company in 1888, displays a T-town plan. This plan is identified by its T-shaped layout in which the main commercial street intersects with the railroad tracks. The railroad tracks were laid in one direction, and the town was platted with its main streets running perpendicular to the railroad tracks. Typical of this plan, the Burlington Depot was located at the intersection of the railroad tracks and Box Butte Avenue, which was historically and is today, the main commercial thoroughfare in Alliance. The half blocks facing Box Butte Avenue were divided into twelve lots.

A decade after founding, the Alliance commercial district extended approximately three and one-half blocks along Box Butte Avenue. In the two-block area between the tracks and Wyoming Street (aka Third Street) the commercial buildings were modest in size and mainly displayed frame

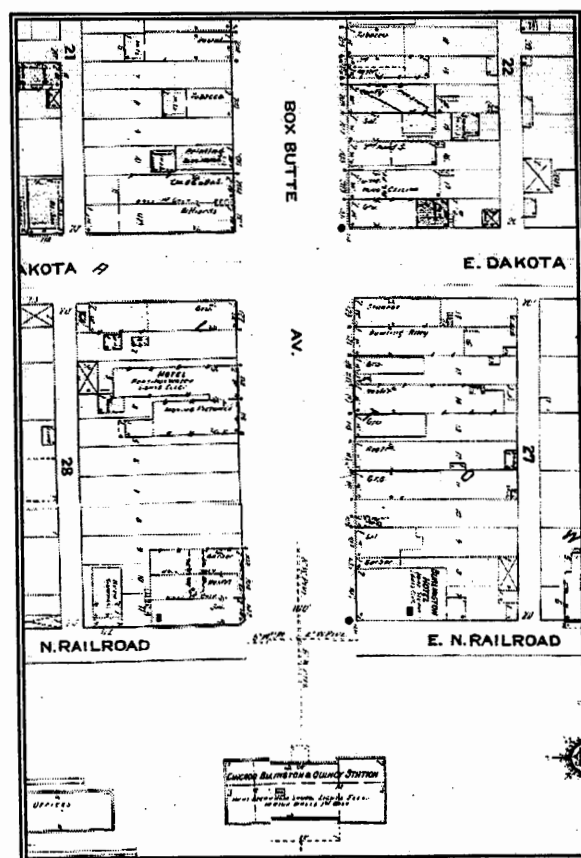


FIGURE 21 - ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA T-TOWN PLAN, SANBORN MAP, 1903

construction. An average of five buildings were spaced among the twelve lots provided for development. The largest building in the area was the Grant Hotel, located at the northeast corner of Box Butte Avenue and North Railroad. Other businesses offered along these blocks were restaurants, barber shops, a feed mill, a furniture repair business, a bank, a cobbler, and several saloons.⁶⁸

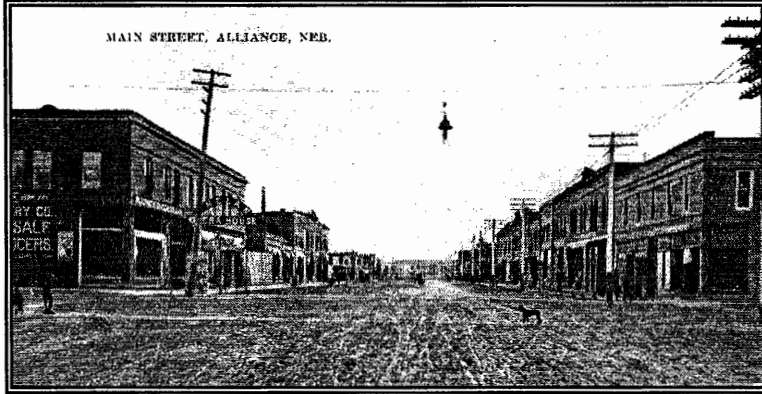


FIGURE 22 - 300 BLOCK OF BOX BUTTE AVENUE, CIRCA 1890, KNIGHT MUSEUM

The main commercial block of the commercial area was located between Wyoming (aka Third Street) and Montana (aka Fourth Street) along Box Butte Avenue. Only two lots out of a total of twenty-four along this block on each side of Box Butte Avenue were not

developed. The buildings on this block were generally two-stories tall. None of the larger scale buildings, which exhibited brick construction, extended the entire length of the lot. The most significant building in this area was the Phelan Opera House (BX01-066), which spanned three storefronts in width. Second floor space in buildings along this block provided lodge rooms, printing shops, and a billiards hall. Services and businesses in the first floors of buildings along this block included drug stores, jewelry shops, a dry goods/general store, cigar shops, confectionaries, hardware stores, grocery stores, a furniture store, a barber shop, a bank, clothing shops, a meat shop, a newspaper, a post office, and an opera house. The W.W. Norton Building (BX01-215), the Adler Building (BX01-020), the Fletcher Block (extant, not surveyed) and the First National Bank Building (BX01-019) are extant commercial buildings which serviced the 1890s population of Alliance.⁶⁹

One of the oldest retail companies in Alliance was the Newberry Hardware Company, started in 1888 by C.A. Newberry. It began as a tin shop and flourished as a wholesale hardware business (BX01-217; BX01-218). The firm even employed traveling sales people to sell to a five-state area. In 1914, Newberry erected a new hardware store (BX01-021) in Alliance. This building is not only extant, but it is perhaps the most architecturally significant

⁶⁸ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map of Alliance* 1899.

⁶⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map of Alliance* 1899.

commercial property in the community. In 1968, Newberry's was sold to the Ace Hardware chain.⁷⁰

Shortly after the turn of the century, the southern two blocks of the downtown offered almost twice as many places of business as the previous decade. Added services to the community included bowling alleys, as well as more restaurants, saloons, and lodging rooms. In keeping with the physical fabric of the

area, most of these new buildings were frame and stood one-story tall. The 300 block of Box Butte Avenue continued to house the finest buildings in the downtown. Based upon the 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the prominent buildings along this street were known as "blocks" such as the Norton Block (BX01-215), Kings Block (BX01-214), Newberry Block (not extant), Poler Block (aka Adler Block, BX01-020), Fletcher Block (extant, altered, not surveyed), Draver Block (not extant), Hart Block (not extant), and the Syndicate Block (aka Phelan Opera House, BX01-066).⁷¹

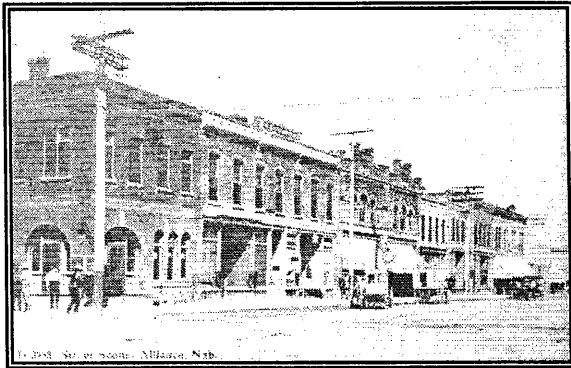


FIGURE 23 - 300 BLOCK BOX BUTTE AVENUE, ALLIANCE, 1910, KNIGHT MUSEUM

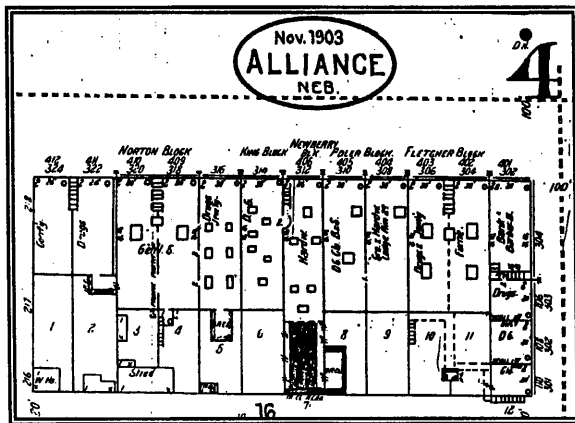


FIGURE 24 - "BLOCKS" IN ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA, 1903, SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP, NSHS

Since Alliance was located along the Burlington tracks, the community supported several large hotels to accommodate railroad clientele. One of the tallest buildings erected in the downtown was the Drake Hotel (BX01-229) built in 1905. The new three-story hotel cost its owner approximately twenty-five thousand dollars. The 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

⁷⁰ Roberts Whitcomb Laing, *Legend and Memory* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1979), 23-24.

⁷¹ The addresses on the commercial blocks changed to reflect the number of the block from the railroad tracks. For example, the third block north of the railroad track was the 300 block of Box Butte Avenue. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alliance* 1903.

indicates five hotels located in Alliance's downtown with the Drake Hotel as the only three-story building with lodging facilities.⁷²

One of the most prolific periods of construction in downtown Alliance occurred between 1910 and 1920. All of the lots, with the exception of three located on the west side of the 100 block of Box Butte Avenue, were filled with commercial buildings. Another change to the district involved the renaming of the east-west streets to numbers, with the street abutting the railroad track entitled First Street. By 1920, the 500 block of Box Butte Avenue included the 1920 Lowry & Henry Garage (extant, altered, not surveyed) and the 1914 Box Butte County Courthouse (BX01-063). New buildings erected on the 400 block of Box Butte Avenue included Newberry's Hardware Store (BX01-021), the 1914-1915 B.P.O.E. Building (BX01-025), and the 1916 United States Post Office (BX01-064). The most significant construction in the downtown occurred between First and Third streets. Approximately fifteen of the twenty-seven buildings located within the two block area were built during the 1910s. These buildings, which stood between one and two-stories tall, exhibited twentieth century commercial vernacular architecture. The exteriors, clad with brick, were ornamented with corbeling and transoms. Reflecting the period of construction, many of the business additions in the CBD, such as auto sales rooms, tire stores, and garages, were related to the increased use of the automobile.⁷³

Three of the most significant buildings constructed during the early twentieth century were public facilities. In 1905, the first library opened in Alliance. Four years later, the library board organized and applied for a donation from Andrew Carnegie for the construction of a library. With the ten thousand dollars donated from Carnegie and another twenty-five hundred dollars locally raised, the project began after the purchase of property at the northwest corner of Fourth Street and Laramie Avenue. The Alliance Carnegie Library (BX01-042) was constructed in 1912 on Fourth Street, one block west of the commercial district. In 1925, the library offered its patrons a collection of ten thousand books.⁷⁴ One year after the erection of the library, a seventy-five thousand-dollar bond passed for the construction of the Box Butte County Courthouse (BX01-063) located on the north end of the commercial area. The design of the building was drafted by the Kansas City architectural firm of Rose and Peterson. In December of 1914, construction on the Neo-Classical

⁷² "Hotel Will Be Built," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 22 August 1905; Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Map of Alliance* 1910.

⁷³ Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Alliance* 1910, 1920.

⁷⁴ "Splendid Growth of City Library Shown in Report," *Alliance Times and Herald* 20 January 1925.

designed building was complete and a dedication ceremony was held.⁷⁵ One year after the completion of the courthouse, plans for a new post office (BX01-064) were undertaken. The building plans were prepared by the supervising architect's office in Washington, D.C. With the addition of three impressive public buildings, Alliance began to take on a more urban appearance.⁷⁶

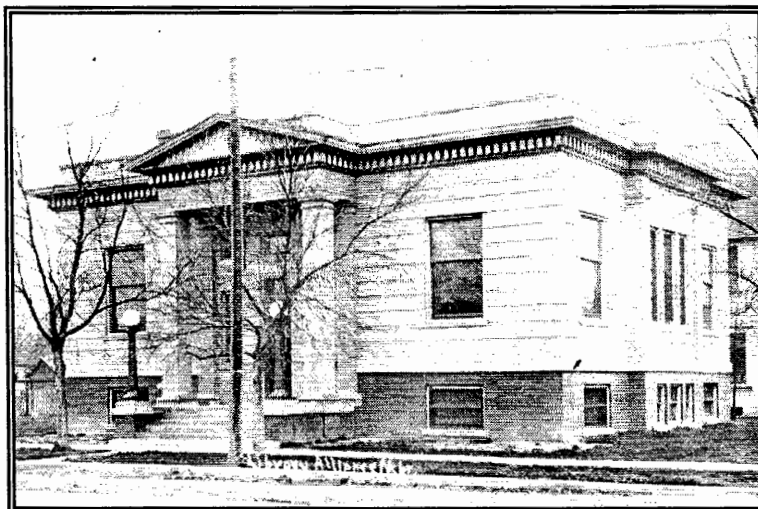


FIGURE 25 - CARNEGIE LIBRARY (BX01-042), ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1915, NSHS

Apparently due to the increased commercial construction in the downtown area, the city contracted to have Box Butte Avenue paved. The street was improved with red paving bricks spanning from the south end at the Burlington tracks, and north as far as Sixth Street. In keeping with the aesthetic improvements, retail business continued to grow in the 1920s, with the people of Alliance considering their city to be a commercial hub which covered a one-hundred mile radius. The parcel post system allowed regional customers to purchase products from Alliance merchants through mail-order.⁷⁷

Later construction booms in Alliance occurred just prior to the Great Depression and after World War II. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, three fraternal lodges, the circa 1917 Masonic Temple (extant, altered, not surveyed), the 1925 Eagles Building (BX01-024), and the 1929 I.O.O.F. Building (BX01-224) were built in Alliance. The presence of four fraternal buildings in Alliance indicated the importance of these groups in the community. Fraternal lodges, which formed in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

⁷⁵ Barbara Beving Long, "Box Butte County Courthouse," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Listed 10 January 1990.

⁷⁶ "First Bids For The New Building," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 16 April 1915.

⁷⁷ "Bricklayers Making Very Rapid Progress," *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* 17 September 1920; "Retail Business Shows Healthy Growth in City," *Alliance Times and Herald* 6 October 1925.

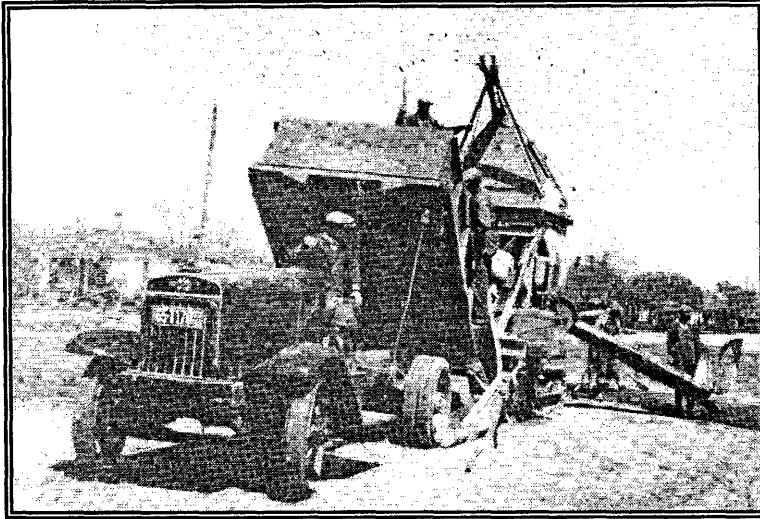


FIGURE 26 - PAVING THIRD STREET, ALLIANCE, 1929,
KNIGHT MUSEUM

centuries, provided interaction for people with similar backgrounds and provided financial and emotional support to the community's social infrastructure. Donations to medical facilities, scholarships, and public improvements--as well as insurance policies for members--comprised some of the projects undertaken by fraternal organizations.⁷⁸

The high ratio of fraternal buildings in Alliance's downtown, as well as the size and ornate appearance of the facilities, indicates the impact these organizations had on the commercial area. These buildings, which generally housed retail businesses in the first floors and meeting rooms in the upper stories, provided places for meeting, as well as social functions.

In addition to the importance placed on fraternal activity during this period, the news was very important to the people of Box Butte County. Alliance has supported a newspaper since its founding, and it eventually attained regional circulation. In 1930 the Sallows Building (Alliance Times-Herald Building - BX01-220) was erected to house the newspaper and provide office space for doctors. Upon completion, a free dance was held to celebrate the site.⁷⁹

During the Great Depression, the Alliance Municipal Building (BX01-041) was constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1936 and 1937. The building, which cost nearly one-hundred thousand dollars to build, was designed by Omaha architect John Latenser & Sons. A portion of the construction cost, estimated at \$78,750, was from a

⁷⁸ Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, 3 vols. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), vol. 3, Social and Political, 5-1 to 5-3.

⁷⁹ "Times-Herald Becomes Daily to Solidify NW Nebraskans," *Alliance (Neb.) Daily Times-Herald* 75th Anniversary Edition 21 September 1963; "Complete Suites In New Building," *Alliance Times and Herald* 8 July 1930; "Times-Herald Building Dance Draws Huge Crowd," *Alliance Times and Herald* 25 April 1930.

Public Works Administration (PWA) grant.⁸⁰ With the construction of the Municipal Building, the people of Alliance finally enjoyed a public auditorium.

World War II affected the local economy as a result of the activation of the Alliance Army Air Base. Despite the deactivation of the base in the fall of 1945 and reduction of available merchandise, downtown

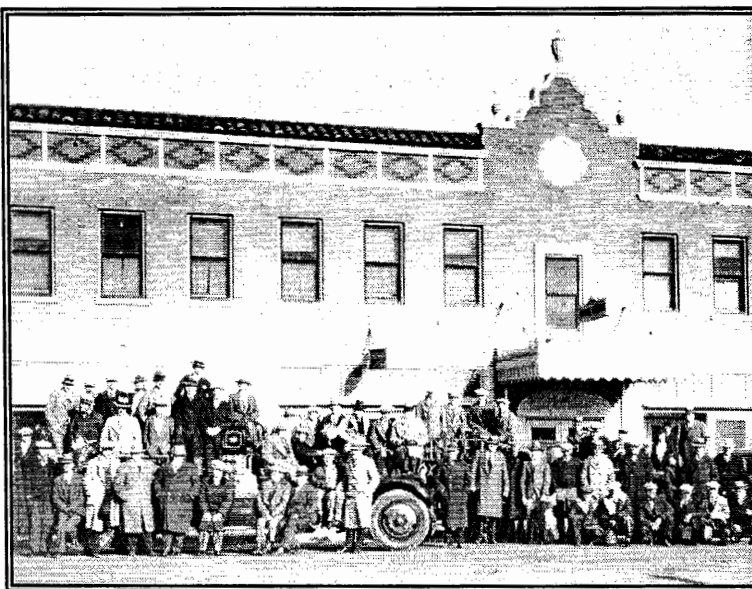


FIGURE 27 - SALLOVS BUILDING (BX01-220), ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1930s, KNIGHT MUSEUM

Alliance thrived. The Christmas shopping season in 1945 was a huge success, with purchasing records broken despite the minimal inventory available. The people of Alliance felt that their downtown area was ready to "burst at the seams" with no room available in any direction for new commercial construction. They anticipated increased commercial trade after the war as soldiers and families came back to Alliance, and new businesses showed interest in the broadening Panhandle market.⁸¹

The promise of the end of the war brought new construction to downtown Alliance. The Slagle Memorial Clinic (BX01-216) was built in 1947 at the north end of the downtown on Box Butte Avenue. Although plans for the building were drafted in 1945, construction on the new clinic could not be started until materials were freed from the war effort.⁸² Although many of the downtown buildings have been altered and "modernized" since World War II, very little new construction has occurred since then.

⁸⁰ "City Hall Plans are Under Consideration," *Alliance Times and Herald* 8 November 1935; "Can Start City Hall By Dec. 15," *Alliance Times and Herald* 8 October 1935.

⁸¹ "Bursting at the Seams," *Alliance Times And Herald* 22 May 1945.

⁸² "Alliance Landmarks Make Way For Modern Brick Structures," *Alliance Times and Herald* 28 August 1945.

The history of Alliance's downtown indicates a steady growth from the 1880s through the 1940s, with a consistent variety of businesses and prominent commercial blocks. Businesses such as Newberry's Hardware Company, the Drake Hotel and the Times-Herald Building provided Alliance with a strong economic base which served a regional market spanning into several surrounding counties. This foundation will allow Alliance to continue to prosper commercially into the twenty-first century.

ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA

Early commercial development in Alliance occurred along Box Butte Avenue, north of the Burlington Railroad tracks. The first generation of commercial buildings, either constructed in Alliance or transplanted from the community from Grand Lake north of the city, was made up of primarily frame, false front, one-story buildings. Due to their extended vertical facades, which provided an illusion of height, these buildings were often constructed in newly platted commercial centers. All of the false front buildings in the CBD have been replaced with brick, second generation buildings.⁸³

In the last several decades of the nineteenth century, the architectural character of the commercial district began to change when the false front buildings were replaced with more permanent masonry buildings. One of the first brick buildings to serve as an anchor for the fledgling commercial center was the 1895 Phelan Opera House (BX01-066), located at 323 Box Butte Avenue. This vernacular building stands two stories tall and has segmented arched windows, stone sills, and decorative brickwork.

The architectural character of the commercial district also changed around the turn of the century with the introduction of styles rooted in classical design. Romanesque Revival style buildings were typically adorned with arched entrances and fenestration, flat roofs, string courses, elaborate cornices, art glass, and corner entrances. This style, which was mainly executed in brick or stone, was often used in the design of government facilities and financial institutions to impart a sense of stability and protection.⁸⁴ The earliest extant Romanesque Revival style buildings constructed prior to 1899 in Alliance reside along Box Butte Avenue,

⁸³ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988), 244-245.

⁸⁴ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988), 246.

between Third and Fourth streets. The 1894 First National Bank Building (BX01-019) and Adler Building (BX01-020), located at 302 and 308 Box Butte Avenue respectively, display brick construction, arched openings, and corbeling.

Buildings incorporating the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture were also erected in Alliance around the turn of the century. Like Romanesque Revival style, this building design was also commonly used for public facilities. Typical Neo-Classical Revival style features include full-height classical columns,

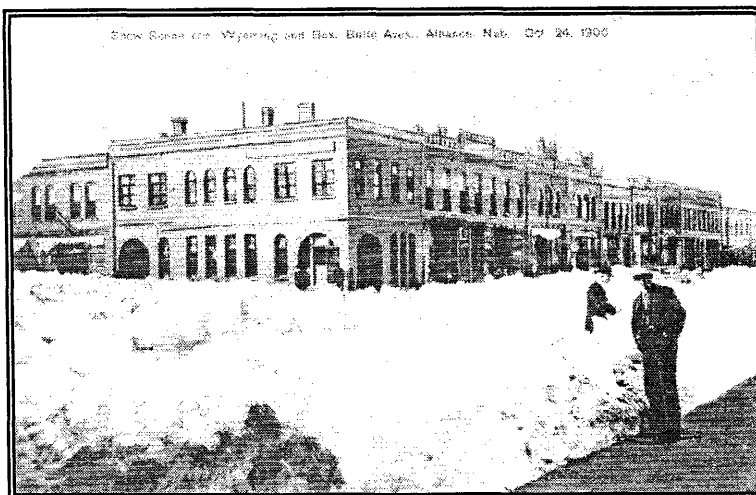


FIGURE 28 - WEST SIDE OF 300 BLOCK OF BOX BUTTE AVENUE, ALLIANCE, 1906, KNIGHT MUSEUM

symmetrical facades, balustrades, pediments, and ornate cornices.⁸⁵ Prominent government-related buildings located on the periphery of the Alliance business district include the Box Butte County Courthouse (BX01-063), the Alliance Municipal Building (BX01-041), and the United States Post Office (BX01-064). To accommodate increased use, all three buildings display modern additions. However, the main elevation of the courthouse and the municipal building have remained fairly intact and display many of their features, including pilasters, columns and symmetrical facades. The Alliance Carnegie Library (BX01-042), also designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style, is located one block west of the main thoroughfare. It exhibits a central portico with square columns and pedimented roof, dentils and cornice. The 1940 Northwestern Bell Company Building (BX01-026) displays Neo-Classical Revival influence with its arched windows displaying floral designs in glazed terra cotta relief.

Later buildings exhibiting high style features are located on Box Butte Avenue north of Fourth Street and one block east and west of Box Butte Avenue on Fourth Street. The Chicago Commercial style was utilized in the construction of one of the largest retail businesses in Alliance. This style, which is rooted in steel frame technology, is often

⁸⁵ John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 68-69; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 342-345.

characterized by geometric forms, sculptured terra cotta, window bands, and projecting eaves.⁸⁶ The Newberry Hardware Store (BX01-021), erected by C.A. Newberry in 1914, stands as the most prominent building in the downtown. Constructed in the Chicago Commercial style, this building is three-stories tall and exhibits quoins, dentils, brackets and a protruding cornice. The Newberry Company also constructed two other buildings in the downtown, the Newberry Tin Shop (BX01-217) at 315 Laramie Avenue, and the Newberry Warehouse (BX01-219) at 119 West Fourth Street. Although these buildings are vernacular in form and simplistic in style, they represent part of the history of the Newberry Company in Alliance.

Spanish Colonial Revival style, generally constructed between the 1920s and the 1930s in Nebraska, is characterized by red tile roofs, arched openings, cornices, and parapets. Exterior materials include stone, brick, and stucco.⁸⁷ Two buildings in the commercial district display this style of architecture. The Times-Herald Building (BX01-220), located on the eastern edge of the downtown, was constructed in 1930 as home to the local newspaper. Prominent features include two-story brick construction with arched corner doors, a stepped corner tower, polychromatic brick design along the cornice and a red clay tile false roof. The circa 1929 Worley Studio (BX01-228), located at 508 Box Butte Avenue, is a smaller version of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in a commercial form. The one-story building features a flat roof and stucco cladding. The main entrance exhibits a barrel tile hipped roof and stepped sides.

The modernistic period of architecture is represented in downtown Alliance with several different styles. Art Deco style buildings, generally constructed between 1920 and 1945, often display details formed from the same material visible on the entire building, stepped facades, ornamentation around the openings, and a string course along the roofline. The slightly later style of Art Moderne is characterized with smooth elevation materials, rounded edges, window bands, and an overall streamlined appearance.⁸⁸ Just north of the Newberry Hardware Store at 410 Box Butte Avenue is the Alliance Theater (BX01-023). This Art Deco style building was constructed in 1937 and features a vertical, stepped facade which

⁸⁶ Marilyn W. Klein and David P. Fogel, *Clues to American Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: Starrhill Press, 1986, 36-37; John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 64-65.

⁸⁷ John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 2-3; Marilyn W. Klein and David P. Fogel, *Clues to American Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: Starrhill Press, 1986), 49.

⁸⁸ Marilyn W. Klein and David P. Fogel, *Clues to American Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: Starrhill Press, 1986, 50-51; John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 76-79.

is accented with colored, glazed tile. Across Box Butte Avenue is the Drake Hotel (BX01-229), which was remodeled 1941 so that its front elevation displayed Art Moderne elements such as glass block windows, pedimented roofline and a central door. The 1947 Slagle Memorial Clinic (BX01-216) also exhibits Art Moderne features such as glass block windows, windows bands, and a smooth, streamlined wall surface.

Twentieth century commercial vernacular design was widely used in the early decades of the 1900s. These buildings generally exhibit rectangular-shaped elevations. Variations are exhibited through fenestration, materials, and affixed ornamentation. Common features found on these buildings include brick construction, large plate glass windows on the first floor, simple second story windows, decorative cornices, corbeling, pilasters, belt and string courses, and transoms. When erected in a row, these buildings often share common walls.⁸⁹

A dense number of twentieth century commercial vernacular buildings are located along Box Butte Avenue between the Burlington tracks and Third Street. These buildings generally stand between one and two-stories tall. Constructed of yellow, brown and red brick, the buildings display simplistic design. Modern signage and wood shingle awnings have altered the original appearance of many of these twentieth-century commercial vernacular buildings. A fine example of this form is the Frankle Building (BX01-213) erected in 1920. With the exception of some brick work and a concrete name plate, this building lacks any pronounced

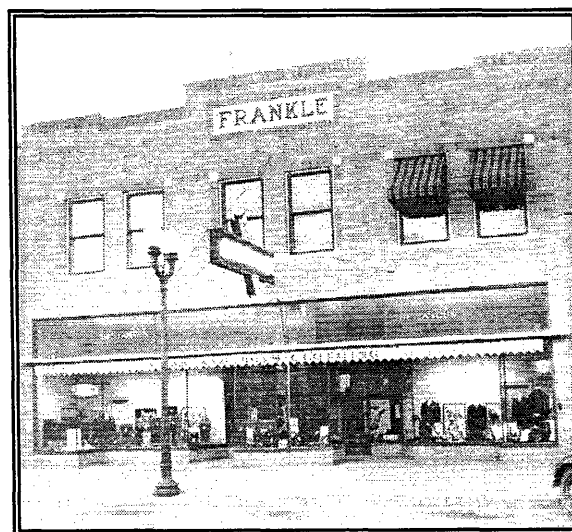


FIGURE 29 - FRANKLE BUILDING (BX01-213), ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1925, KNIGHT MUSEUM

ornamentation. Four lodge buildings were constructed in downtown Alliance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While the B.P.O.E (BX01-025) and Eagles (BX01-024) buildings are located on the 400 block of Box Butte Avenue, the Masonic Temple and I.O.O.F. Building (BX01-224) are located on the 100 block of West Third Street. The upper stories of the I.O.O.F. and Eagles buildings are intact and display twentieth century commercial vernacular features. However, the storefronts have been altered to accommodate

⁸⁹ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988), 240-241.

retail space. Both the Masonic Temple and the B.P.O.E. Building have been significantly changed on the exteriors. The Masonic Temple was entirely covered with stucco panels and the only remaining original feature is the cornice and insignia. The B.P.O.E. Building, designed in the Neo-Classical Revival style, has been altered with blocked-in windows.



FIGURE 30 - BOX BUTTE AVENUE, LOOKING NORTH FROM THIRD STREET, ALLIANCE, CIRCA 1945, KNIGHT MUSEUM

The physical fabric of the Alliance downtown represents a broad span of architectural styles found on the Great Plains. While the most popular and common form erected in the city was twentieth century commercial vernacular, other styles such as Romanesque Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Art Deco, and Art Moderne were also used in the design of downtown buildings. This collection of buildings serves as a tool in understanding the commercial development of the community.

Furthermore, the variety of resources, building types, and construction dates identified in the district mirrors the architectural evolution of a typical commercial center in western Nebraska.

SURVEY RESULTS OF ALLIANCE COMMERCIAL AREA

Thirty-one commercial buildings were intensively surveyed in Alliance. Criteria for an intensively surveyed property directly correlates to its exterior integrity, including fenestration, doorways, materials, and form. The area of study extends five blocks of Box Butte Avenue, running from the Burlington Railroad tracks at the south end, north to Sixth Street, as well as the south side of the 100 block of West Third Street, the north side of the 100 block of East Fourth Street, the south side of the 100 block of West Fourth Street, the 300 block of Laramie Avenue, and the west side



FIGURE 31 - DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE, 1995, NESHPO

of the 400 block of Laramie Avenue. The intensive survey included the recordation of each property with black and white as well as color slide photographs, sketched floor plans, and field forms. Based upon material compiled by Deb Dopheide of Alliance, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, city and business directories, and newspaper articles, construction dates were either pin-pointed or estimated for each property. These dates were utilized to understand boom periods of construction, as well as subsequent alteration to individual buildings. The information illustrates the evolution of Alliance's downtown.

Sixty-seven properties were analyzed in relation to a potential National Register of Historic Places District. While forty of these properties were considered to contribute to a potential district, the remaining twenty-seven were labeled as non-contributing. Therefore, forty percent of the buildings in the district are considered to be non-contributing. *It is the professional opinion of the MVAC staff that the downtown of Alliance does not present a high enough ratio of architecturally significant buildings with sufficient physical integrity to be considered eligible for the National Register as an historic district at this time.*

The methodology incorporated to determine integrity for considering buildings as contributing or non-contributing to a potential district in Alliance was based primarily on architectural evidence. Since nearly all first floor facades have been altered through the years, for the most part they were not evaluated as strictly if the second floor facades were relatively intact. Only in the case of one-story buildings were the buildings considered non-contributing if the storefronts were severely altered. Second floor alterations were looked at more carefully, and were considered non-contributing if the wall material was covered (i.e. stucco, metal), windows were blocked in and/or cornices removed. Second story windows may have been slightly altered (i.e. replacement sashes installed, but window surrounds intact) and the building could still be considered contributing. The non-contributing buildings in the Alliance commercial area were sufficiently scattered along Box Butte Avenue and its side streets to create a sense of disruption to the continuity of architectural/historic cohesiveness. The appearance of a block of early twentieth-century brick buildings gives a feeling of continuity much stronger than a block of a few historic brick buildings, interrupted every second or third building by one covered in 1960s metal facing material or modern stucco.

Many changes have been made to buildings in Alliance's downtown through the years, and the ones which cause the most concern from a historic preservation perspective have occurred in the past fifty years. The National Register criteria requires that the majority of properties have a sense of **integrity of materials** (does it still exhibit its original wall *materials*, windows, doors?), **design** (do the buildings within the district relate spatially to one another, or have alterations and/or demolitions broken the flow of the district's layout/*design*?), **workmanship** (have the artistic/*workmanship* features of the historic buildings been retained, or have they been covered or removed by alterations?), **feeling** (does one *feel* the history of the area when they visit the district, or do they not relate to it as a place with history?) and **association** (does the visitor *associate* the present buildings with a sense of the district's historic development?)

Though many of the post 1945 alterations to Alliance's downtown have been made to the buildings for economic reasons (it is less expensive to replace old, leaky windows with new aluminum sashes or block in the window openings altogether than to replace with new wood frame windows) or in the name of modernization (in the 1960s and 1970s, metal facades were considered more "modern" and more up-to-date than the original "old-fashioned" brick facades), these kinds of alterations are not in keeping with the established standards of historic preservation. Alterations of these kinds were not wrong within the context of their original objectives. However, alterations which change the **architectural/historic** (pre-1946) appearance of the buildings are evaluated by historic preservation professionals in determining their integrity, which is the basis for listing on the National Register.

Alterations have various long-term effects on historic buildings. Changes to a building may fall under two categories: additive and subtractive. An *additive* example may be the addition of metal siding to the front facade of a two-story brick building, thus covering the transom, second story windows, and cornice ornamentation. If the windows, cornice, and transom are left intact under the metal facade, this alteration would be considered additive, and may be reversed relatively easily by removal of the modern material to restore the historic integrity of the building. An example of *subtractive* may be a two-story brick building which has had the transom windows removed and blocked-in with plywood, the second story windows filled in with brick, the cornice removed, and the entire facade covered with stucco. The transom, window sashes and frames, and cornice ornamentation would probably have been discarded, and the stucco would be permanently attached to the building. This is subtractive because the original architectural elements were removed and there is little hope of restoring the historic integrity of the building. Obviously, based on this discussion, a building which has been altered via an additive method, as opposed to a subtractive method, has a greater chance of being rehabilitated to take on its original historic appearance.

In conclusion, Alliance's downtown represents a flourishing commercial hub. Buildings located in the commercial area house a variety of businesses. As a result of the brick street covering Box Butte Avenue and side streets, the downtown exhibits a cohesive flow. However, due to the large number of commercial buildings altered with metal siding, permastone, stucco panels, wood shingle awnings, and modern signage, the Alliance downtown is not considered to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a district. The Newberry Hardware Store (BX01-021), at 402 Box Butte Avenue was identified as potentially individually eligible for the National Register, and the Drake Hotel (BX01-229) at 423 Box Butte Avenue may be considered to be individually eligible for its historic association, pending further research. Nonetheless, residents of the community should continue to foster historic preservation through a number of activities. First, as described in the introduction to this report, Alliance can seek Certified Local Government (CLG) status which requires the creation of a local historic sites commission. Under the authority of the commission and city council, the downtown could be designated as a local historic district. Second, the community could adopt a preservation plan to guide the future of historic preservation activities in the city. The Alliance Mainstreet program is an excellent tool for revitalization and economic development, and its continued support should be nurtured.

IV

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the introduction the main purpose of this report is to identify, at a reconnaissance level, significant historic properties. In order to identify what may be significant, it is vital to understand major trends in Nebraska history. Although this report mainly identifies properties that may have architectural significance, we still need to understand the motivations, trends and influences that caused our forebears to construct the buildings they did.

To achieve this understanding, the NeSHPO has developed historic contexts. A historic context is used to group related historic properties based upon a theme, a time period, and a geographic area. Contexts may often seem to be nothing more than common-sense groupings of buildings by category. It is important, however, to create these groupings in order to understand the overall historical evolution of an area as reflected in the built environment.

What follows is a description and definition of historic property contexts found in Box Butte County as part of this survey. First, each context is given a short definition. This definition is only part of the complete discussion of the context. For further information about contextual themes and definitions, please contact the NeSHPO. Next is a brief discussion of the types of properties found in Box Butte County that fit into the particular context. Last is a list of properties found in Box Butte County that fit into the context and may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

A majority of the following information regarding vernacular forms of architecture is based upon a prominent work by Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings entitled *American Vernacular Design: 1870-1940*. Other sources utilized in this chapter regarding the architectural development of Box Butte County include Virginia and Lee McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*, John J.G. Blumenson's *Identifying American Architecture*, and Marilyn W. Klein and David P. Fogle's *Clues to American Architecture*.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: RELIGIOUS/CEREMONIAL

This context refers to personal or institutionalized systems of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices based on faith.

All of the churches identified during the survey were located in the communities of Berea, Hemingford, and Alliance. The remnants of rural churches in the county are now archaeological sites and nearby, associated cemeteries. A vernacular form church in Hemingford has been identified as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This building is one-story tall, constructed of red brick with a concrete foundation, pediment, and flat brick window surrounds with corner accents.⁹⁰

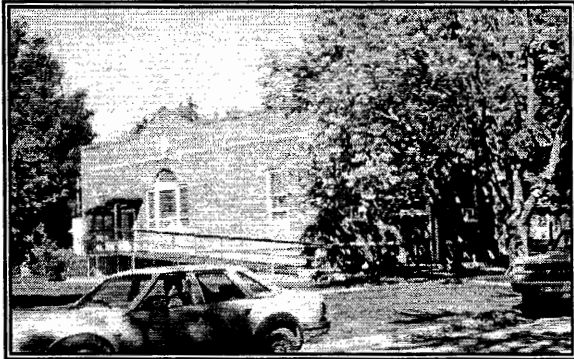


FIGURE 32
BX04-032
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
FRONT GABLE
1926
HEMINGFORD

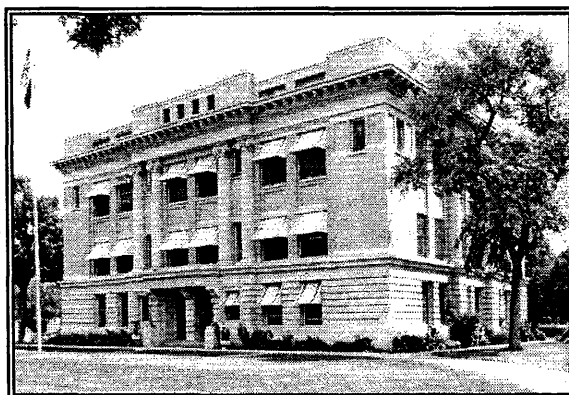
⁹⁰ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988), 12-13.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: GOVERNMENT

This context refers to the act or process of governance involving an organization or agency through which political authority and/or functions are performed.

Box Butte County is home to one significant property associated with the context of Government. The Box Butte County Courthouse, currently listed on the National Register, is a fine example of Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. The Neo-Classical Revival style is generally characterized by a full-height porch with classical columns, symmetrical facade, balustrade, pediments, and ornate cornices.⁹¹

FIGURE 33
BXO 1-063
BOX BUTTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE
1913
ALLIANCE
LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER IN 1990



⁹¹ John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 68-69; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knoph, Inc., 1984), 342-345.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: SOCIAL ASSOCIATION

This context refers to organizations of people, other than religious\ceremonial or governmental, that have a common interest. This common interest creates a basis for affiliation and, generally, a patterned interaction.

One social/fraternal hall has been determined potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in Box Butte County. The design of this vernacular building, used to house the Zapadni Cesko Bratsky Jednota (ZCBJ) Lodge #298, is typical of public facilities constructed in rural western Nebraska. It displays a front gable roof, frame construction, central double doors, and clapboard siding.

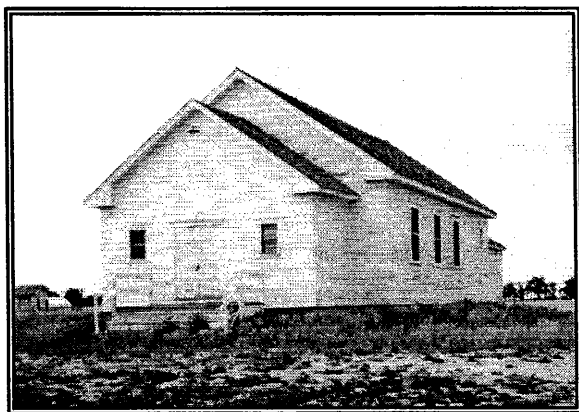


FIGURE 34
BX00-001
ZAPADNI CESKO BRATRSKY JEDNOTA LODGE
#298
FRONT GABLE
1928
BOX BUTTE COUNTY (RURAL)

HISTORIC CONTEXT: EDUCATION

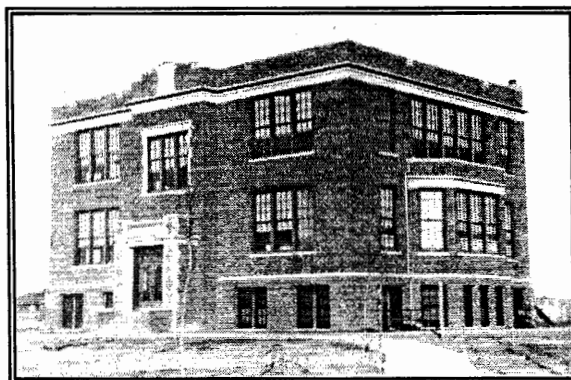
This context refers to the act or process of imparting or acquiring knowledge.

No schools in Box Butte County were identified as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because many have been significantly altered from their original form. However, since the historic context of Education is vital to the historical development of the county, it will be addressed.

The urban schools typically display brick construction and stand from two to three-stories tall. Many of the larger schools display high style ornamental features such as quoins, brackets, dentils, cornices, parapets and keystones. These details are distinctive of public buildings designed with classical styles.

Vernacular schools exist as a common form of architecture utilized in the construction of rural facilities in Box Butte County. Vernacular form schools, ranging from one to four-room buildings, mainly stood one-story tall and were ornamented by the placement of the bell tower.⁹² In the 1960s, the rural school system consolidated in Box Butte County and apparently most of the frame school houses were replaced with brick buildings. Furthermore, approximately thirty-three percent of the county merged into District 10, which resulted in bussing rural children into Hemingford. Therefore, most of the earlier frame rural schools have been left vacant for the past three decades.⁹³

FIGURE 35
EAST SIDE SCHOOL (NOT EXTANT), ALLIANCE,
CIRCA 1915, KNIGHT MUSEUM



⁹² Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988), 12-13.

⁹³ Centennial Committee. *City of Alliance and Box Butte County Nebraska*. (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 39-41.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: PLANNED ENVIRONMENT

This context refers to a landscape which was purposely designed to be aesthetically or artistically pleasing and/or serve a function\purpose.

One property associated with the historic context of Planned Environment has been listed on the National Register. The Alliance Central Park Fountain, located at the corner of Tenth Street and Niobrara Avenue, was erected by the Works Progress Administration and city park personnel in 1935. It features levels of water streams, highlighted with colored light bulbs and is set in an octagonal concrete base. The fountain was a feature in Central Park, which once displayed stone walls, gates, and a sod museum building. Most of these other park elements have been removed, or were destroyed by flood.

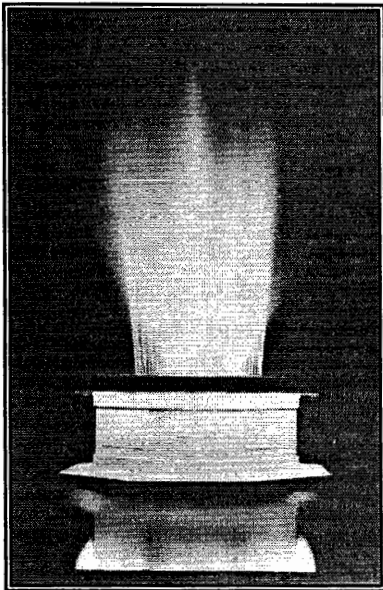
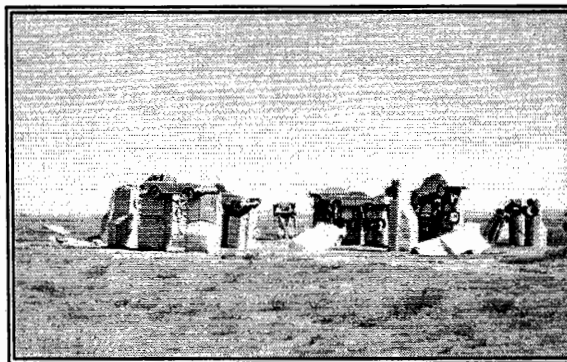


FIGURE 36
BXO1-067
ALLIANCE CENTRAL PARK
FOUNTAIN
GENERAL ELECTRIC NOVALUX
7-PROJECTOR
1935
ALLIANCE
LISTED ON NATIONAL
REGISTER IN 1990
PHOTO COURTESY OF KNIGHT
MUSEUM

Although Carhenge does not date within the period of significance and is therefore not eligible for the National Register at this time, it was surveyed as a unique property type. Conceived and erected by Jim Reinders in June of 1987, this automobile sculpture mirrors the form of Stonehenge in England. Carhenge is located two and one half miles north of Alliance on U.S. Highway 385.

FIGURE 37
BXOO-038
CARHENG
AMERICAN MADE CARS
1987
BOX BUTTE COUNTY (RURAL)



HISTORIC CONTEXT: AGRICULTURE

This context refers to any level of food production, including crops and livestock; and in varying degrees the preparation of these products for marketing.

Farm houses/ranches surveyed in Box Butte County associated with the context of Agriculture typically display vernacular forms. The most common construction method in the county was frame. Due to the variety of agricultural products raised, an assortment of outbuildings were constructed on farmsteads in Box Butte County. The barns in the county generally displayed frame construction, gambrel and gable roofs, and wood cladding. Chicken coops, storage sheds, machine sheds, Quonsets, and grain bins were also common outbuildings and structures identified on many of the surveyed farmsteads/ranches. Often these buildings were positioned in close proximity to the main house to expedite farm work. By the third decade of the twentieth century, as a result of the increased rural use and ownership of automobiles, many farmsteads featured modern garages. During this period, garages erected on older farmsteads contrasted with the main house since they exhibited wider clapboard and moderately pitched roofs.

The importance of farm-related buildings in Box Butte County was evidenced by articles carried in the *Alliance Times and Herald*. In 1920, the paper contained articles entitled "Modern Type of Dairy Barn, Modern Design For Dairy Barn, and Good Barn For Up-To-Date Farm" which provided illustrations including a barn, floor plans, dimensions, materials, and the capacity for animals. These newspaper articles usually presented a discussion regarding how a new barn could improve the income of farm families.

The earliest farmhouses on the Great Plains were often constructed of sod, and several of these buildings can still be found in Box Butte County. Dugouts, which could be constructed quickly and at low cost, were often temporary sod dwellings erected by settlers on the plains. Carved into a slope in the landscape, dugout construction generally required a front wall built of sod. A glass window and a hinged door were often the most elaborate ornamentations to the front elevation. Damp, dark living conditions and possible collapse of the roof proved to be the drawbacks to a dugout.⁹⁴

Occasionally sod houses were constructed or retained as permanent dwellings. When building a sod house, one of the most important concerns was location. When settlers chose a site for a sod house the location had to be sheltered to avoid the elements, but high enough to be safe from spring flooding. Foremost, however, the site had to be on or near the right kind of prairie grass for sod construction. The wetter fall and spring months served as the best construction periods due to the damp ground. The construction of a house, measuring twelve to sixteen feet, required level ground and approximately one acre of sod. The sod blocks, which were approximately four inches deep and three feet long, were cut with plows and spades. Once the cut sod became dry it was difficult to stack. Thus, only enough blocks needed for a one day work period were extracted from the ground.⁹⁵

Sod bricks were stacked in a particular way to prevent the insect infestation and repel water. The sod sections were arranged grass-side down in a staggered bond, sometimes three bricks

⁹⁴ Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 35; Andrew Gulliford, "Sod Houses: Cool in the Summer and Warm in the Winter," N.d. File: Sod Houses Located at the Platte Valley Museum, Gering, NE.

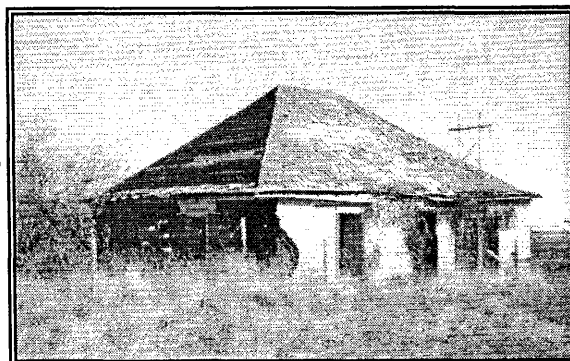
⁹⁵ Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 35; Andrew Gulliford, "Sod Houses: Cool in the Summer and Warm in the Winter," N.d. File: Sod Houses Located at the Platte Valley Museum, Gering, NE; Roger L. Welsch, "The Nebraska Soddy", *Nebraska History* 48 (Winter 1967), 335-339.

deep. Overhead beams placed in the walls framed the door and window openings. Upon completion, the walls were flattened and any gaps were packed with excess sod chunks.⁹⁶

Similar to sod construction, clay houses were also erected on the plains from materials close at hand. These buildings consisted of clay, often mixed with weeds, dung, and/or sand, molded into brick then dried during the heat of the day. The bricks were also laid in a staggered system and resemble the sod house in form and width of walls.⁹⁷

Between 1977 and 1996, 135 sod buildings were identified throughout the state by the NeSHPO as a result of the historic buildings survey. To date, surveyors have inventoried approximately three quarters of the state. Six sod buildings and two clay buildings were documented in Box Butte County. Although most of these buildings have fallen into disrepair, two are intact and considered to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

FIGURE 38
BXOO-040
SOD HOUSE
CA. 1900
BOX BUTTE COUNTY (RURAL)



⁹⁶ Mae Manion, comp., *"Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County* (Alliance, NE: Iron Man Industries, 1970), 35; Andrew Gulliford, "Sod Houses: Cool in the Summer and Warm in the Winter," N.d. File: Sod Houses Located at the Platte Valley Museum, Gering, NE; Roger L. Welsch, "The Nebraska Soddy", *Nebraska History* 48 (Winter 1967), 335-339.

⁹⁷ David Murphy, "Building in Clay on the Central Plains," In *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture III*, edited by Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman, (Columbia, MO: The University of Missouri Press, 1989), 75.

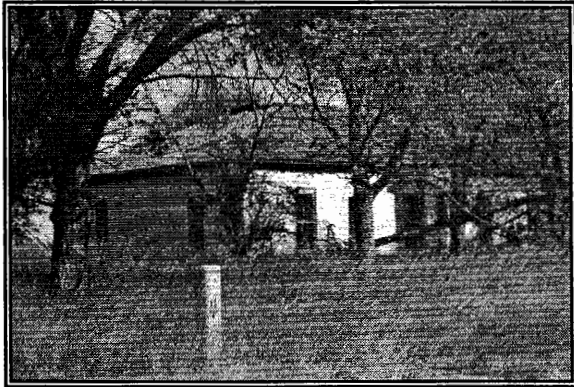


FIGURE 39
BX00-077
SOD HOUSE
CA. 1900
BOX BUTTE COUNTY (RURAL)

HISTORIC CONTEXT: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This context refers to the development of a system of buying and selling commodities, goods and/or services.

Two commercial properties were identified in the county as potentially eligible for the National Register. The Newberry Hardware Store displays the Chicago Commercial style of architecture, which was developed in the late nineteenth century. This style is characterized by the use of metal “skeletons,” three-part rectangular windows, and decorative spandrels and cornices.⁹⁸ The ornamentation of the Newberry Hardware Store incorporates classical features such as quoins, brackets, dentils, and lintels. The Drake Hotel was built in a commercial vernacular style originally in 1906, with an Art Moderne style entrance added to the main facade in 1941. This building may be eligible under Criterion A for its history, however, further research will be necessary to determine this status.

⁹⁸ Marilyn W. Klein and David P. Fogel, *Clues to American Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: Starrhill Press, 1986), 36-37; John J.G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture* (Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1981), 64-65.

FIGURE 40
BXO1-021
NEWBERRY'S HARDWARE STORE
CHICAGO COMMERCIAL STYLE
1914
ALLIANCE

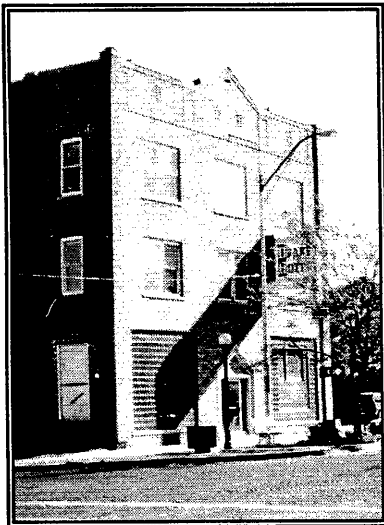


FIGURE 41
BXO1-229
DRAKE HOTEL
COMMERCIAL
VERNACULAR/ART MODERNE
STYLE
1906/REM. 1941
ALLIANCE

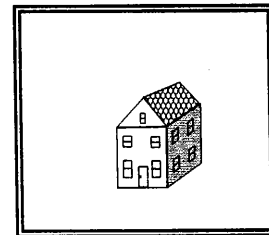
HISTORIC CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT SYSTEMS

This context refers to the division, acquisition and ownership of land; and related patterns created by cultural systems. The context is not restricted to any particular era or cultural group.

The largest number of buildings surveyed in Box Butte County were houses. Because houses make up the vast majority of buildings in any community setting, it is necessary to use stricter integrity standards for houses than for other property types, such as industrial or commercial buildings. Therefore, houses added to the NeHBS inventory were evaluated based on whether they appeared much as they did originally, or if alterations were made, they were determined to have occurred more than fifty years ago. Therefore, no houses with new siding, windows, doors, or modern patios or porches were added to the inventory, unless the alterations were made to a side of the house not visible from the street or road.

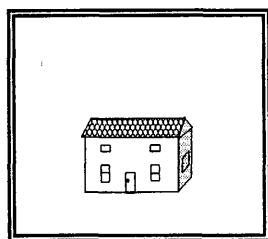
The houses recorded in Box Butte County towns range from vernacular forms to high style architecture. Vernacular forms, such as front, side, and cross gables, gable ells and Ts, and one and two-story cubes, comprise the most popular types of houses in the county. Characterized by simplicity, these buildings usually are identified by their height, floor plan, and roof type. Construction methods in Box Butte County include balloon frame, brick and concrete block. Construction periods attached to each vernacular form listed below are based upon dates utilized in the central United States.⁹⁹

- The **front gable** form, characterized by a rectangular plan, was mainly constructed between 1840 and 1925. The gable ends of this form define the front and rear elevation of the house.



FRONT GABLE

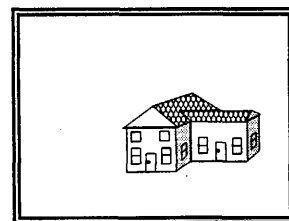
⁹⁹ Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* 3 vols. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Vol. 2, 3-1 to 3-10.



SIDE GABLE

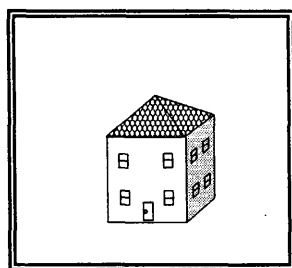
- A side gable house, which is also characterized by a rectangular plan, features gable ends at the side elevations. This form, which has been prominent for approximately one hundred years, dates between 1840 and 1940.

- The **gable ell** form, constructed between approximately 1860 and 1910, often exhibits two gabled sections set perpendicular to one another. This form usually consists of an "L" or "T" plan and displays a variety of stories.

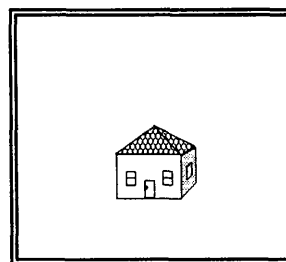


GABLE ELL

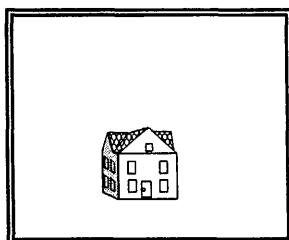
- While the **two-story cube** dates from approximately 1850 to 1880, the smaller version known as the **one-story cube** was constructed from approximately 1870 and 1930. It is important to note that two-story cubes constructed after the turn of the century often display features characteristic of a related style, the American Foursquare. Hipped roofs and boxy massing typify the one and two-story cubes.



TWO STORY CUBE



ONE STORY CUBE



CROSS GABLE

- The **cross gable** form is named for two intersecting, identical roof lines. These buildings, which normally stand two-stories high, exhibit square plans. The cross gable form dates from approximately 1890 to 1930.

“High style” buildings were also identified during the reconnaissance survey of Box Butte County, but were not as prevalent as vernacular forms. High styles exhibited in the county include Queen Anne, Neo-Classical Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Mission, and American Foursquare.¹⁰⁰

- **Queen Anne**, which generally dates from 1880 to 1900, is characterized by asymmetrical facades, steeply pitched rooflines, a variety of wall surface textures, prominent towers, tall chimneys, and porches with bargeboard trim.
- Dating generally between 1895 and 1935, **Neo-Classical Revival** houses display classical details such as Ionic columns, pediments, and gable returns.
- **Dutch Colonial Revival**, which dates approximately between 1895 and 1920, is characterized by a prominent gambrel roof. Other features include double-hung, multi-paned windows and prominent doors ornamented with side lights, pilasters, fanlights, and pediments.
- The red tile roof serves as one of the most identifiable features of **Spanish Revival** houses, typically constructed between 1900 and 1930. Details on these buildings include stucco or brick clad elevations, stepped parapets, arched window and door openings, and terra cotta details..
- **American Foursquare** houses, usually constructed between 1900 and 1930, are two-stories tall with low hipped roofs. These buildings are often ornamented with overhanging eaves, central dormers, Tuscan columns, and balustraded or closed railings on the one-story porches.

Standard plans were likely used in the construction of many Box Butte County homes. After the 1840s, America's population became increasing transient. With the influx of immigrants, westward migration across the country and increased population, architectural promoters played upon the idea that single family dwellings provided stability. Furthermore, home ownership provided financial insurance in an unstable economy. Promoters of standardized architectural plans utilized common architectural terms, mill cut materials, and standard house types to give the middle class an impression that they could move often and experience less of a disruption. The purpose of the standard plan single family dwelling evolved through several stages. In the mid 1800s, plan book authors believed that a house

¹⁰⁰ Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* 3 vols. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Vol. 2, 2-6, 2-15, 2-18, 2-25, 2-29 to 2-32.

should be viewed as a guarded haven. By the end of the century, they opined that a house should reflect creativity. After the turn of the century, the houses designed for the middle class served as a tools to promote better health.¹⁰¹

One of the most recognized styles to utilize standardized plans was the Bungalow, which was designed to upgrade well-being with an emphasis on nature. From the 1910s to 1940s, the Bungalow served as one of the most popular house styles erected in the United States. It was one of the first architectural trends to spread from the west coast to the east. Due to its practical design and low construction costs the style was promoted by magazines and plan books, contractors, home economists, and even feminists. This style of house allowed people of moderate incomes to afford a dwelling.¹⁰²

The Bungalow is characterized by projecting rooflines, large-scale chimneys, large front porches, and millwork ornamentation such as brackets. Often, when second stories were constructed they were downplayed to emphasize the horizontal lines of the house. A variety of exterior materials included weatherboard, stucco, pebble dash, and stone. Interior features included large porches, modern kitchens and bathrooms, and exposed rooms.¹⁰³

In the 1920s, the local newspaper in Alliance provided subscribers with standard plans for houses. In 1920, the *Alliance Semi-Weekly Times* carried articles such as "Good Home for Average Family; Square House is Always Popular; and House Built of Concrete Block," which included illustrations and corresponding floor plans. During that same year, a local lumber company also published advertisements in the paper which carried standard plans. The company noted that the identified plan, as well as a variety of other plans and construction materials could all be purchased with one stop to the lumber yard. By the mid-1920s, the *Alliance Times and Herald* offered a section to its readers entitled "Your Home." The articles included line drawings of the houses and floor plans, measurements, plan numbers, materials, and descriptions of the interiors.

¹⁰¹ Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 238-240.

¹⁰² Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 183-184.

¹⁰³ Barbara Wyatt, *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* 3 vols. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Vol. 2, 2-26.

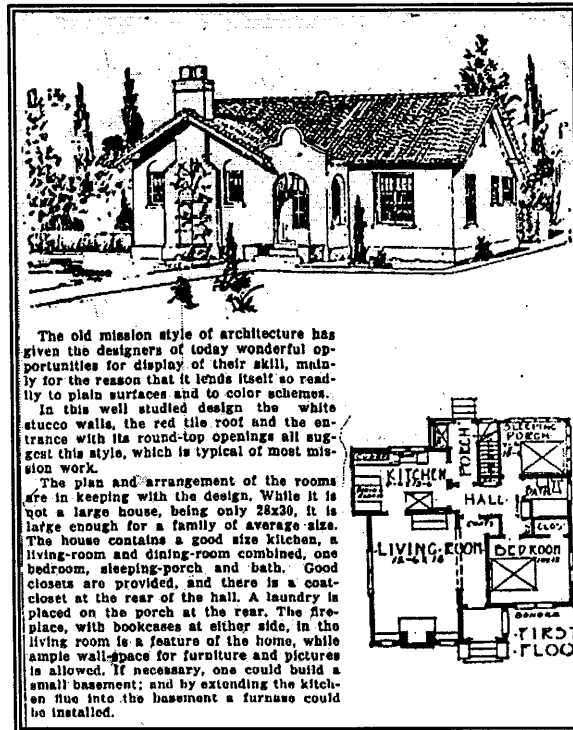


FIGURE 42 - HOUSE PLAN ADVERTISEMENT,
ALLIANCE TIMES AND HERALD, 10 FEBRUARY
1925

One of the houses identified as potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places is a Sears, Roebuck and Company design. Mail order companies such as Montgomery Wards and Sears, Roebuck and Company, in the early decades of the twentieth century offered complete house kits of a wide variety of styles. Named "Alhambra" (BX01-197) by the company, the house displays Mission style architecture. Features seen on this house included stucco exterior, curvilinear gables, overhanging eaves, an open porch, and a terrace. It sold from the catalog between 1918 and 1929, at a cost of \$1,969 to \$3,134.¹⁰⁴

The following inventory of architecturally significant houses in Box Butte County range from high style to vernacular forms. Eighteen houses in Box Butte County are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These single dwellings were constructed over an eighty-year period, dating from 1890 up to 1930.

¹⁰⁴ Katherine Cole Stevenson and H. Ward Jandl, *Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1986).

FIGURE 43
BXO 1-005
HOUSE
DUTCH COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE
CA. 1910
ALLIANCE

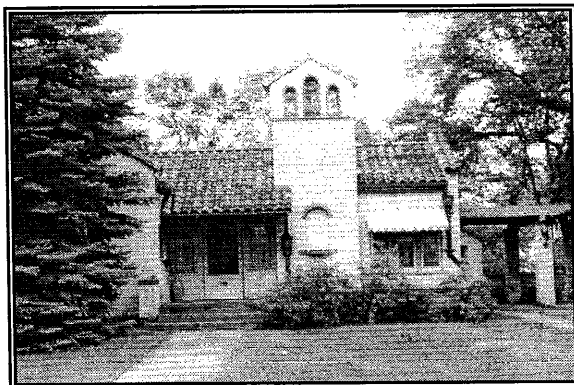
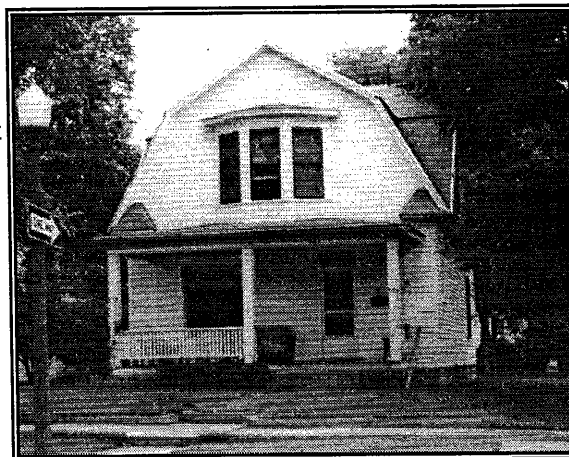


FIGURE 44
BXO 1-008
SALLOWS HOUSE
SPANISH REVIVAL STYLE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 45
BXO 1-011
HOUSE
SIDE CLIPPED GABLE W/ BUNGALOW
INFLUENCE
CA. 1925
ALLIANCE

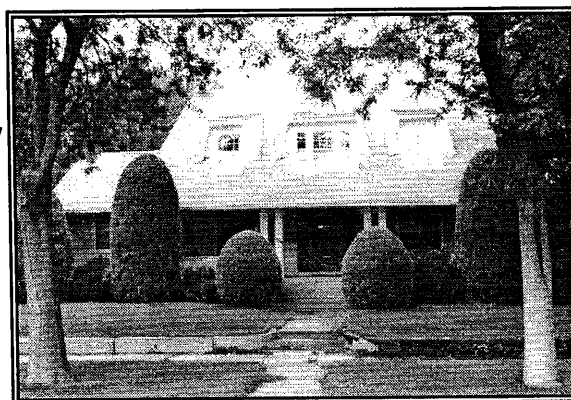




FIGURE 46
BXO I-043
HOUSE
SIDE GABLE W/ NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL
STYLE INFLUENCE
CA. 1890
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 47
BXO I-044
HOUSE
NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE
CA. 1910
ALLIANCE

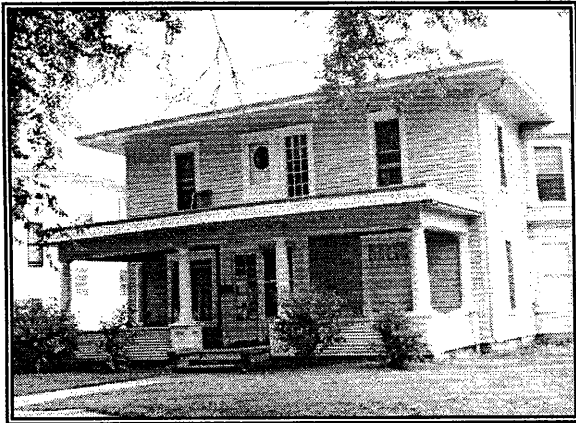


FIGURE 48
BXO I-045
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 49
BXO I-O48
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE W/ ORIENTAL
INFLUENCE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE

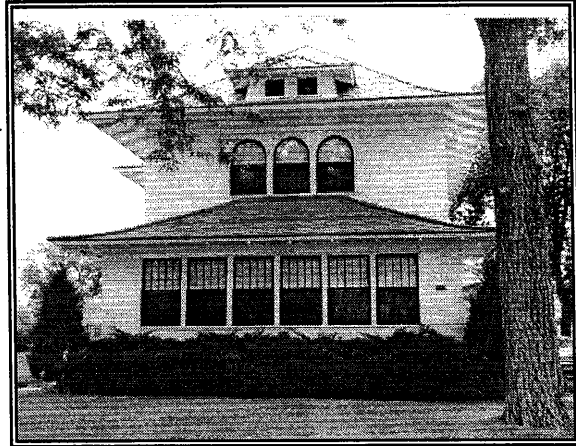
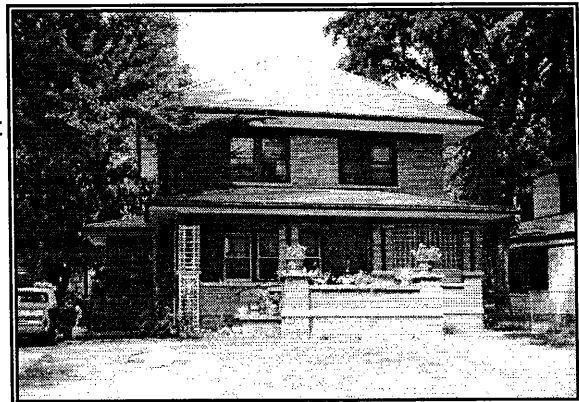


FIGURE 50
BXO I-O55
HOUSE
QUEEN ANNE STYLE
CA. 1910
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 51
BXO I-O58
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE



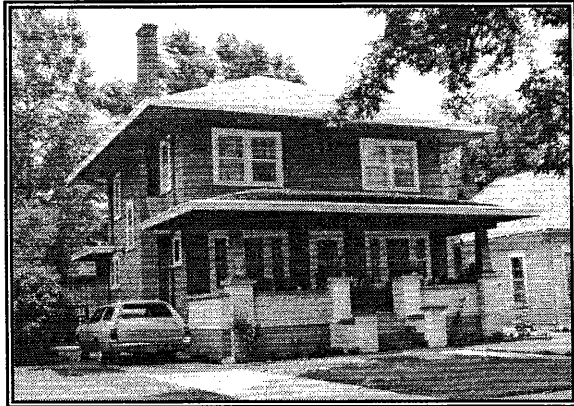


FIGURE 52
BXO I-059
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 53
BXO I-061
HOUSE
GABLE ELL W/ QUEEN ANNE STYLE
INFLUENCE
CA. 1900
ALLIANCE

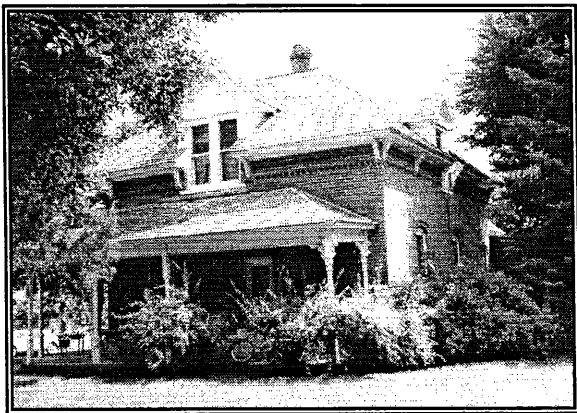


FIGURE 54
BXO I-062
HOUSE
TWO-STORY CUBE W/ ITALIANATE STYLE
INFLUENCE
CA. 1890
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 55
BXOI-132
HOUSE
DUTCH COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE
CA. 1920
ALLIANCE

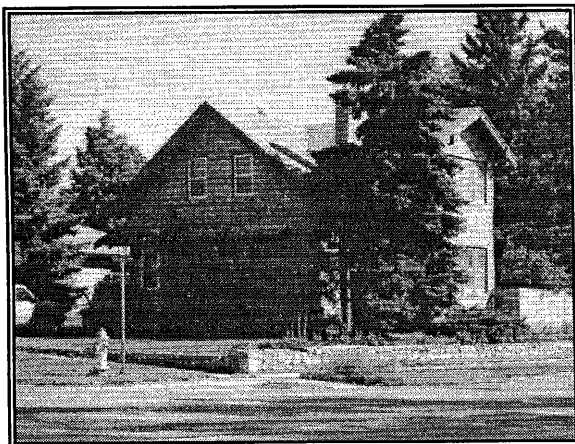
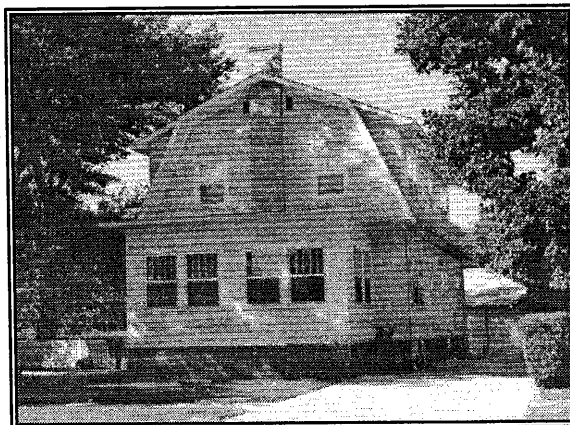
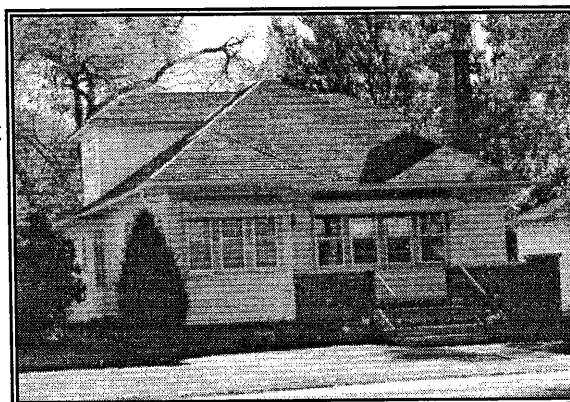


FIGURE 56
BXOI-133
HOUSE
GABLE ELL
CA. 1930
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 57
BXOI-134
HOUSE
ONE-STORY CUBE W/ BUNGALOW INFLUENCE
CA. 1930
ALLIANCE



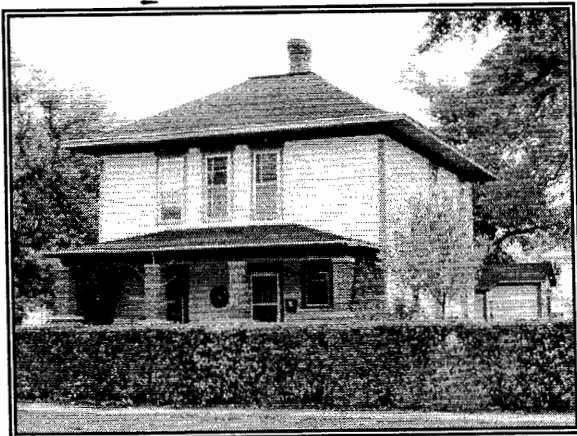


FIGURE 58
BXO1-150
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE
CA. 1915
ALLIANCE

FIGURE 59
BXO1-166
HOUSE
AMERICAN FOURSQUARE
CA. 1910
ALLIANCE



FIGURE 60
BXO1-197
HOUSE (ALHAMBRA)
MISSION STYLE
1921
ALLIANCE

V

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were conceived to give the people of Box Butte County ideas as to how to use this report as a tool to continue historic preservation efforts in their county. The report provides a great amount of information, and gives access to other information housed at the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, State Archives, local libraries, and provides a link for groups interested in historic preservation efforts.

1) AN INTENSIVE SURVEY OF SOD AND PUDDLED CLAY HOUSES IN BOX BUTTE COUNTY:

A number of sod and clay houses were identified during the reconnaissance survey of Box Butte County, however, due to the limitations of the study, intensive research about the history of each of these rare buildings was not conducted. Additionally, the survey was limited to what was accessible from the public right-of-way, and other sod and clay houses or buildings may remain in the county. More intensive recordation, both written and photographic, should be conducted before all of these unusual properties are lost forever.

2) NATIONAL REGISTER MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING FOR THE SOD BUILDINGS IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA:

As indicated in the discussion about sod buildings in the previous chapter, there over one hundred known sod buildings extant in the state of Nebraska. A Multiple Property essay should be prepared to facilitate the speedy recordation and listing of these rare properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

3) NATIONAL REGISTER MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING FOR THE HISTORIC PROPERTIES OF BOX BUTTE COUNTY:

An efficient way of listing properties within a set geographic area (such as a county) is to prepare a Multiple Property Report which provides the necessary background research to evaluate potentially eligible properties and encompasses all of the potential National Register eligible properties. Historic contexts for the majority of National Register eligible properties

would be prepared and the final document would facilitate the individual listing of most potentially eligible properties in the Box Butte County.

4) NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS FOR POTENTIAL INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED IN THIS REPORT:

A total of twenty-five (25) properties were identified during the NeHBS which were considered to be potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Currently there are only three properties in Box Butte County (one is an archaeological site, and not addressed in this report) which have been listed on the National Register. See Chapter I, Introduction for more information on the National Register program in Nebraska.

5) ORAL HISTORY PROJECT REGARDING THE ALLIANCE ARMY AIR BASE AND CHIMNEY TOWN:

The history of the Alliance Army Air Base and Chimney Town still benefits from the fact that there are many people in the community that remember World War II and the events associated with these properties. An organized oral history program to record the recollections of these people is vital, before the information is lost forever.

6) APPLICATION FROM ALLIANCE FOR CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) STATUS:

The CLG program, which is administered through the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) could provide Alliance with further assistance pertinent to historic preservation projects in the city and would complement other programs such as the Main Street Program.

7) CONTINUED SUPPORT OF ALLIANCE MAIN STREET PROGRAM, WHICH CURRENTLY SUPPORTS HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS IN THE COMMERCIAL AREA OF ALLIANCE:

The Alliance Main Street Program, which receives technical and financial support from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program, is a valuable tool for the community such as Alliance. The Main Street Program promotes economic development while upholding the principles of historic preservation. Continued support on the part of the community would be a valuable asset to Alliance.

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APPENDIX

DEFINITION OF ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

AKA: also known as.

AMERICAN FOURSQUARE STYLE (1900 - 1930): Popularized by mail-order catalogues and speculative builders in the early twentieth century, the style is typified by its box-like massing, two-stories, hipped roof, wide overhanging eaves, central dormers and one-story porch spanning the front facade.

ARCH: A curved structural member used to span an opening.

ART DECO STYLE (1925 - 1945): A style which incorporated futuristic or highly stylized historical details. The style is characterized by an angular, hard edge suggesting machine precision, low-relief geometrical ornamentation with details such as shallow fluted columns, chevrons, stylized sunbursts, and smooth materials such as granite, terra cotta, and glass.

ART MODERNE STYLE (1930 - 1950): Related to the Art Deco style, it features industrial technology and streamlined simplicity. Features include smooth, rounded corners, horizontal massing, details in concrete, glass block, aluminum and stainless steel.

BALLOON FRAME: A type of support for wood-frame buildings which utilize vertical studs which extend the full height of the wall, and floor joists fasted to the studs with nails. Balloon frame buildings in Nebraska became popular with the expansion of the railroad, when milled lumber could be shipped to the plains for relatively low cost.

BALUSTRADE: Decorative, usually open design, railing generally found around exterior porches, balconies, and sometimes indoor stairs and balconies.

BAY: The area of a facade usually between piers or columns creating divisions of the main facade.

BEAUX ARTS STYLE (1895 - 1920): A form of Neo-Classical Revival based on monumentally-conceived classical design, taught in the eighteenth and nineteenth century at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris.

BRACKETS: Support members used under overhangs of a roof, usually decorative in nature.

BUILDING: A building is erected to house activities performed by people.

BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN STYLE (1890 - 1940): An architectural style characterized by overhanging eaves, modest size, open porches with large piers and low pitched roofs.

CARARRA GLASS: A type of opaque, colored glass which was popular as a cladding to commercial facades, particularly of the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles, in the 1920s through the 1950s.

CHICAGO COMMERCIAL STYLE (1895 - 1930): A commercial and office style of building which reflects new technologies at the turn of the century which allowed buildings to be built in greater heights and larger expanses of open floor space. It utilizes metal skeleton framing, usually steel, usually covered with a brick "skin" and fenestration typically in bands or groupings, often tripartite.

COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE (1900 - 1940): Usually residential in type, the Colonial Revival style features symmetrical facades, classical details, gable roofs, columns, pilasters, denticulated cornices, and shutters.

COLUMNS: A circular or square vertical support member.

COMMERCIAL VERNACULAR (CA. 1860 - 1930): A form of building used to describe simply designed commercial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which usually display large retail windows and recessed entrances on the first floor.

CONTRIBUTING (NATIONAL REGISTER DEFINITION): A building, site, structure, or object that adds to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities for which a property is significant. The resource was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significance of the property, and possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period.

CONTRIBUTING (NEHBS DEFINITION): A building, site, structure, object, or collection of buildings such as a farmstead, which meets the NeHBS criteria of integrity, historic association, historic architectural qualities, and was present during the period of significance. **A property which contributes to the NeHBS is generally evaluated with less strictness than for individual listing on the National Register.**

CORBELING: A series of projections typically found on a brick wall surface.

CORNICE: A decorative band, usually constructed of tin or frame, which extends along the top of a wall.

COUNTY CAPITOL (1880 - 1910): This was a popular form for courthouses in the state and was inspired by the United States Capitol in Washington D.C. Usually situated on a courthouse square, these square-shaped monumental buildings exhibit corner pavilions, a prominent central domed tower, and Neo-Classical or Romanesque styling.

DENTILS: Small square blocks in masonry or wood usually located along the cornice.

DORMERS: A vertical window projecting from the roof. Variations of dormer types can be from the roof forms utilized, for example shed dormers, gable dormers, and hipped dormers.

EAVES: The edge of a roof that extends beyond the wall surface.

ECLECTIC STYLE (1890 - 1910): An eclectic building displays a combination of architectural elements from various types. It usually resulted when a house designed in one architectural style was remodeled in another.

ELEVATION: Any single side of a building or structure.

ELIGIBLE: Properties that meet the National Park Service criteria for nomination and listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

EXTANT: Still standing or existing (as in a building, structure, site, and/or object)

FACADE: The vertical elevation of a building, including front, sides, and back.

FALSE FRONT: A vernacular form of building, generally found on commercial buildings, which is typically a one-and-one-half story front gable frame building with a square facade which extends vertically in front of the front-facing gable. This gives the appearance of a larger, more substantial building. The form is also known as "boom-town."

FENESTRATION: The arrangement of openings, for example windows and doors, on an elevation.

FOUNDATION: The support of a building which is exposed near ground level.

FRONT GABLE (CA. 1860 - 1910): The vernacular form of a building, generally a house, in which the triangular end of the roof faces the street.

GABLED ELL (CA. 1860 - 1910): The vernacular form of a building, generally a house, in which two gabled wings are perpendicular to one another in order to form an "L" shaped plan.

GABLED T (CA. 1860 - 1910): The vernacular form of a building, generally a house, in which two gabled wings are perpendicular to one another in order to form a "T" shaped plan.

GABLE END: The triangular end of an exterior wall.

GABLE ROOF: A roof type formed by the meeting of two sloping roof surfaces.

HIPPED ROOF: A roof type formed by the meeting of four sloping roof surfaces.

ITALIANATE STYLE (1870 - 1890): A popular style for houses, these square, rectangular, or L-shaped two-story buildings have low-pitched hip roofs, with wide eaves usually supported by heavy brackets, tall narrow windows, and front porches. In some cases, the roof may be topped with a cupola.

LATE GOTHIC REVIVAL (1880 - 1920): A later version of the Gothic style, these buildings are generally larger and use heavy masonry construction. In churches, masonry is sometimes used throughout the structure. The pointed-arch window opening remains a key feature, however, designs are more subdued than those of the earlier period.

LINTEL: A horizontal member located at the top of a window, door or other opening.

MANSARD ROOF: A roof having two slopes on all four sides, and a flat top.

MODERNISTIC STYLE (1930 - 1940): Art Deco, the earlier Modernistic phase, was used primarily for public and commercial buildings and is characterized by angular composition, with towers and vertical projections and smooth wall surfaces with stylized and geometric motifs, including zigzags and chevrons. Art Moderne, the later version, shows smooth wall finishes without surface ornamentation, asymmetrical facades with a horizontal emphasis, flat roofs, rounded corners, and bands of windows or curved window glass creating a streamlined effect.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: The official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology,

engineering, and culture which are significant in the prehistory or history of a community, state or the nation. The program is administered by the National Park Service through State Historic Preservation Offices (See Chapter I, Introduction, for more information).

NEO-CLASSICAL STYLE (1900 - 1920): An architectural style characterized by a symmetrical facade and usually includes a pediment portico with classical columns.

NON-CONTRIBUTING (NATIONAL REGISTER DEFINITION): A building, site, structure, or object that does **not** add to the historic architectural qualities or historic associations for which a property is significant. The resource was not present during the period of significance; does not relate to the documented significance of the property; or due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity.

OBJECT: Artistic, simple, and/or small scale constructions not identified as buildings or structures.

ONE-STORY CUBE (C. 1870 - 1930): The vernacular form, generally of a house, which is a one-story building, box-like in massing, low-hipped roof, full front porch recessed under the roof, little ornamentation, and simple cladding, such as clapboard, and less frequently, brick or stucco.

PARAPET: A low wall located on the edge of a roof, may be stepped in form.

PEDIMENT: A decorative, often triangular or semicircular-shaped, element found at the gable of the roof, or above an entryway.

PERIOD REVIVAL STYLE (1920 - 1930): Influenced by the styles of medieval English and French country cottages, these houses are usually of two stories and display irregular massing, steeply pitched roofs with slate or clay tile covering, massive chimneys, half-timbering, casement windows, and attached garages. Period revival styles include Georgian Revival, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Dutch Colonial Revival.

PILASTERS: A rectangular column attached to a wall that is used for decorative purposes.

PORTICO: An entryway to a building, often with an overhanging covering which just covers the entry, yet not large enough to be considered a porch. Often found on period revival style buildings.

POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE: Properties that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places pending further research and investigation.

PRAIRIE SCHOOL STYLE (1900 - 1930): This movement, popularized by the world-renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright, emphasized the integration of a building and its site. Elements of the style include a low-pitched roof line with wide over-hanging eaves, two-stories high with one-story porch, and an overall horizontal emphasis in the design.

PROPERTY: Building(s), site(s), structure(s) and/or object(s) situated within a delineated boundary.

PROPERTY TYPE: A classification for a building, structure, site, or object based on its historic use or function.

QUEEN ANNE STYLE (1880-1900): A style which enjoyed widespread popularity in the state, these two-story houses have asymmetrical facades and steeply pitched rooflines of irregular shape. Characteristics include a variety of surface textures on walls, prominent towers, tall chimneys, and porches with gingerbread trim.

QUOINS: A series of stones, bricks, or wood used to decorate the corners of a building.

RETURNS: The continuation of molding from one surface to another, commonly seen as cornice returns which are carried into the gable end of a building.

ROMANESQUE REVIVAL STYLE (1880-1920): These buildings are generally of masonry construction and usually show some rough-faced stonework. The Roman or round-topped arch is a key feature. Facades are asymmetrical and most examples have towers, brick corbelling and horizontal stone handing.

ROOF TYPES: See definitions of front gable, side gable, hipped, mansard, and shed.

SASH: The framework within which windows are set.

SECOND EMPIRE STYLE (1870 - 1880): A style used for both commercial and residential buildings which is most distinguished by its mansard roofs. Dormer windows are common and with elaborate mouldings and other ornamentations.

SEGMENTAL ARCH: An arch formed by the segment of a circle, generally portrayed over a door or window opening, usually constructed of stone or brick.

SHED ROOF: A roof consisting of one inclined plane.

SIDE GABLE (1860-1940): The vernacular form of a building, generally a house, in which the gable end of the roof is perpendicular to the street.

SIDELIGHTS: A lone fixed window usually flanking both sides of a door or another center window.

SILL: The horizontal framing member at the bottom of a window.

SITE: The location of a prehistoric or historic event.

SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE (1900-1920): These buildings, which have a southwestern flavor, show masonry construction usually covered with plaster or stucco, red-tiled hipped roofs, and arcaded porches. Some facades are enriched with curvilinear and decorated roof lines.

STEPPED FACADE: A facade in which one of the bays protrude from the main plane of the building at a regular interval like stairs.

STEPPED ROOF: See parapet.

STREAMLINED: Smooth wall surfaces, emphasis on horizontal appearance, and curved corners, often used in relation to the Art Moderne style.

STRING COURSE: A continuous horizontal band of brick or stone on a building used to visually divide an elevation.

STRUCTURE: Practical constructions not used to shelter human activities.

SULLIVANESQUE: In the style of architect Louis Sullivan, generally extremely decorative elements, often utilizing stylized organic designs. Sullivanesque ornamentation is often executed in glazed terracotta relief or wrought iron.

TRANSOM: A small window located above a door or larger windows such as in a storefront..

TWO-STORY CUBE (c. 1860 - 1890): The vernacular form, generally used for houses, is characterized by two stories, box-like in massing, a hipped roof, minimal surface ornamentation and simple exterior cladding such as brick, clapboard, or stucco.

VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE: The vernacular form is a functional, simplistic building or structure without stylistic details.

WEATHERBOARD: Wood siding consisting of overlapping boards.